

CAMILLA:
OR,
A PICTURE OF YOUTH.

BY
THE AUTHOR OF
EVELINA AND CECILIA.

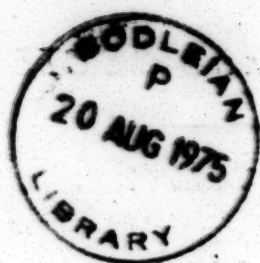
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CAMILLA.

OR,

A PICTURE OF YOUTH.

CHAP. XXII.

Traits of Eccentricity.

THUS passed the first eight days of the Tunbridge excursion, and another week succeeded with many varying event.

Mrs. Arlbery now, impelled with concern for Camilla, and resentment against Edgar, renewed the subject of her opinion and advice upon his character and conduct. "My dear young friend," cried she, "I cannot bear to see your days, your views, your feelings, thus fruitlessly consumed: I have observed this young man narrowly, and I am convinced he is not worth your consideration."

Camilla, deeply colouring, was beginning to assure her she had no need of this counsel; but Mrs. Arlbery, not listening, continued.

"I know what you must say; yet, once more, I cannot refrain venturing at the liberty of lending you my experience. Turn your mind from him with all the expedition in your power, or its peace may be touched for the better half of your life. You do not see, he does not, perhaps, himself know how exactly he is calculated to make you wretched. He is a watcher; and a watcher, restless and perturbed himself, infects all he pursues with uneasiness. He is without trust, and therefore without either courage or consistency. To-day he may be persuaded you will make all his happiness

pinels; to-morrow, he may fear you will give him nothing but misery. Yet it is not that he is jealous of any other; 'tis of the object of his choice he is jealous, lest she should not prove good enough to merit it. Such a man, after long wavering, and losing probable happiness in the terror of possible disappointment, will either die an old bachelor, with endless repinings at his own lingering fastidiousness, or else marry just at the eve of confinement for life, from a fit of the gout. He then makes, on a sudden, the first prudent choice in his way; a choice no longer difficult, but from the embarrassment of its case; for she must have no beauty, lest she should be sought by others, no wit, lest others should be sought by herself; and no fortune, lest she should bring with it a taste of independence, that might curb his own will, when the strength and spirit are gone with which he might have curbed her's."

Camilla attempted to laugh at this portrait; but Mrs. Arlbery intrusted her to consider it as faithful and exact. "You have thought of him too much," cried she, "to do justice to any other, or you would not, with such perfect unconcern, pass by your daily increasing influence with Sir Sedley Clarendel."

Excessively, and very seriously offended, Camilla earnestly besought to be spared any hints of such a nature.

"I know well," cried she, "how repugnant to seventeen is every idea of life that is rational. Let us, therefore, set aside, in our discussions, any thing so really beneficial, as a solid connection formed with a view to the worldly comforts of existence and speak of Sir Sedley's devoirs merely as the instrument of teaching Mandelbert, that he is not the only rich, young, and handsome man in this lower sphere, who has viewed Miss Camilla Throld with complacency. Clarendel, it is true, would lose every charm in my estimation by losing his heart; for the earth holds nothing comparable for deadness of weight, with a poor soul really in love—except when it happens to be with oneself—yet, to alarm the selfish resolution of that impenetrable Mandelbert,

delebert, I should really delight to behold him completely caught."

Camilla, distressed and confused, sought to parry the whole as railery: but Mrs. Arlbery would not be turned aside from her subject and purpose, "I languish, I own," cried she, "to see that frozen youth worked up into a little sensibility. I have an instinctive aversion to those cold, haughty, drawing-back characters, who are made up of the egotism of looking out for something that is wholly devoted to them, and that has not a breath to breathe that is not a sigh for their perfections."

"O! this is far—" Camilla began meaning to say, far from the character of Mandlebert; but ashamed of undertaking his defence, she stopt short, and only mentally added, even excellence such as his cannot, then, withstand prejudice!

"If there is any way," continued Mrs. Arlbery, "of animating him for a moment out of himself, it can only be by giving him a dread of some other. The poor Major does his best; but he is not rich enough to be feared, unless he were more attractive. Sir Sedley will seem more formidable. Countenance, therefore, his present propensity to wear your chains, till Mandlebert perceives that he is putting them on; and then—mount to the rising ground you ought to tread, and shew, at once your power and your disinterestedness, by turning from the handsome Baronet and all his immense wealth, to mark—since you are determined to indulge it—your unbiassed preference for Mandlebert."

Camilla, irresistibly appeased by a picture so flattering to all her best feelings, and dearest wishes, looked down; angry with herself to find she felt no longer angry with Mrs. Arlbery.

Mrs. Arlbery, perceiving a point gained, determined to enforce the blow, and then leave her to her reflections.

"Mandlebert is a creature whose whole composition is a pile of accumulated punctillos. He will spend his life in refining away his own happiness: but do not let

let him refine away yours. He is just a man to bewitch an innocent and unguarded young woman from forming any other connexion, and yet, when her youth and expectations have been sacrificed to his hesitation,—to conceive he does not use her ill in thinking of her no more, because he has entered into no verbal engagement. If his honour cannot be arraigned of breaking any bond,—What matters merely breaking her heart?

She then left the room; but Camilla dwelt upon nothing she had uttered except the one dear and inviting project of proving her disinterestedness to Edgar. "O! at once," she cried, "I could annihilate every mercenary suspicion! If once I could shew Edgar that his situation has no charms for me—and it has none! none! then, indeed, I am his equal, though I am nothing,—equal in what is highest, in mind, in spirit, in sentiment!"

* * * *

From this time the whole of her behaviour became coloured by this fascinating idea; and a scheme which, if proposed to her under its real name of coquetry, she would have fled and condemned with antipathy, when presented to her as a means to mark her freedom from sordid motives, she adopted with inconsiderate fondness. The sight, therefore, of Edgar, wherever she met him, became now the signal for adding spirit to the pleasure with which, already, and without any design, she had attended to the young Baronet. Exertion gave to her the gaiety of which solicitude had deprived her, and she appeared, in the eyes of Sir Sedley, every day more charming. She indulged him with the history of her adventure at the house of Mr. Dubster, and his prevalent taste for the ridiculous made the account enchant him. He cast off, in return, all airs of affectation, when he conversed with her separately; and though still, in all mixt companies, they were resumed, the real integrity, as well as indifference of her heart, made that a circumstance but to stimulate this

this new species of intercourse, by representing it to be equally void of future danger to them both.

All this, however, failed of its desired end. Edgar never saw her engaged by Sir Sedley, but he thought her youthfully grateful, and esteemed her the more, or beheld her as a mere coquette, and ceased to esteem her at all. But never for a moment was any personal uneasiness excited by their mutually increasing intimacy. The conversations he had held, both with the Baronet and herself, had satisfied him that neither entertained one serious thought of the other; and he took, therefore, no interest in their acquaintance, beyond that which was always alive,—a vigilant concern for the manner in which it might operate upon her disposition.

With respect to the Major, he was by no means so entirely at his ease. He saw him still the declared and undisguised pursuer of her favour; and though he perceived, at the same time, she rather avoided than sought him, he still imagined, in general his acceptance was arranged, from the many preceding circumstances which had first given him that belief. The whole of her behaviour, nevertheless, perplexed as much as it grieved him, and frequently, in the same half hour, she seemed to him all that was most amiable for inspiring admiration, and all that was least to be depended upon, for retaining attachment.

Yet however, from time to time, he felt alarmed or offended, he never ceased to experience the fondest interest in her happiness, nor the most tender compassion for the dangers with which he saw her environed. He knew, that though her understanding was excellent, her temper was so inconsiderate, that she rarely consulted it; and that, though her mind was of the purest innocence, it was unguarded by caution, and unprotected by reflexion. He thought her placed where far higher discretion, far superior experience might risk being shaken: and he did not more fervently wish, than internally tremble for her safety. Wherever she appeared, she was sure of distinction: " 'Tis Miss Tyrold, the friend of Mrs. Berlington," was buzzed round the moment she was seen; and the particular favour in which she stood with
some

some votaries of the *ton*, made even her artlessness, her retired education, and her ignorance of all that pertained to the *certain circles*, pass over and forgiven, in consideration of her personal attractions, her youth, and newness.

Still, however, even this celebrity was not what most he dreaded: so sudden and unexpected an elevation upon the heights of fashionable fame might make her head, indeed, giddy, but her heart he thought formed of materials too pure and too good to be endangered so lightly; and though frequently, when he saw her so circumstanced; he feared she was undone for private life, he could not reflect upon her principles and disposition, without soon recovering the belief that a short time might restore her mind to its native simplicity and worth. But another rock was in the way, against which he apprehended she might be dashed, whilst least suspicious of any peril.

This rock, indeed, exhibited nothing to the view that could have affrighted any spectator less anxiously watchful, or less personally interested in regarding it. But youth itself, in the fervour of a strong attachment, is as open-eyed, as observant, and as prophetic as age, with all its concomitants of practice, time, and suspicion. This rock, indeed, far from giving notice of danger by any sharp points or rough prominences, displayed only the smoothest and most inviting surface: for it was Mrs. Berlington, the beautiful, the accomplished, the attractive Mrs. Berlington, whom he beheld as the object of the greatest risk she had to encounter.

As he still preserved the character with which she had consented to invest him of her monitor, he seized every opportunity of communicating to her his doubts and apprehensions. But in proportion as her connexion with that lady increased, use to her manners and sentiments abated the wonderment they inspired, and they soon began to communicate an unmixt charm, that made all other society, that of Edgar alone excepted, heartless and uninteresting. Yet, in the conversations she held with him from time to time, she frankly related the

the extraordinary attachment of her new friend to some unknown correspondent, and confessed her own surprise when it first came to her knowledge.

Edgar listened to the account with the most unaffected dismay, and represented the probable danger, and actual impropriety of such an intercourse, in the strongest and most eloquent terms ; but he could neither appeal her confidence, nor subdue her esteem. The openness with which all had originally and voluntarily been avowed, convinced her of the innocence with which it was felt, and all that his exhortations could obtain, was a remonstrance on her own part to Mrs. Berlington.

She found that lady, however, persuaded she indulged but on innocent friendship, which she assured her was bestowed upon a person of as much honour as merit, and which only with life she should relinquish, since it was the sole consolation of her fettered existence.

Edgar, to whom this was communicated, saw with terror the ascendancy thus acquired over her judgment as well as her affections, and became more watchful and more uneasy in observing the progress of this friendship, than all the flattering devoirs of the gay Baronet, or the more serious assiduities of the Major.

Mrs. Berlington, indeed, was no common object, either for fear or for hope, for admiration, or for censure. She possessed all that was most softly attractive, most bewitchingly beautiful, and most irresistibly captivating, in mind, person, and manners. But to all that was thus most fascinating to others, she joined unhappily all that was most dangerous for herself ; an heart the most susceptible, sentiments the most romantic, and an imagination the most exalted. She had been an orphan from earliest years, and left, with an only brother, to the care of a fanatical maiden aunt, who had taught her nothing but her faith and her prayers, without one single lesson upon good works, or the smallest instruction upon the practical use of her theoretical piety. All that ever varied these studies were some common and ill selected novels and romances, which a young lady in the neighbourhood privately lent her to read ;

read ; till her brother, upon his first vacation from the University, brought her the works of the Poets. These, also, it was only in secret she could enjoy ; but, to her juvenile fancy, and irregularly principled mind, that did not render them more tasteless. Whatever was most beautifully picturesque in poetry, she saw verified in the charming landscapes presented to her view in the part of Wales she inhabited ; whatever was most noble or tender in romance, she felt promptly in her heart, and conceived to be general ; and whatever was enthusiastic in theology, formed the whole of her idea and her belief with respect to religion.

Brought up thus, to think all things the most unusual and extraordinary, were merely common and of course ; she was romantic without consciousness, and eccentric without intention. Nothing steady or rational had been instilled into her mind by others : and she was too young, and too fanciful to have formed her own principles with any depth of reflection, or study of propriety. She had entered the world, by a sudden and most unequal marriage, in which her choice had no part, with only two self-formed maxims for the law of her conduct. The first of these was, that, from her early notions of religion, no vestal should be more personally chaste ; the second, that, from her more recently imbibed ones of tenderness, her heart, since she was married without its concurrence, was still wholly at liberty to be disposed of by its own propensities, without reproach and without scruple.

With such a character, where virtue had so little guide even while innocence presided ; where the person was so alluring, and the situation so open to temptation, Edgar saw with almost every species of concern the daily increasing friendship of Camilla. Yet while he feared for her firmness, he knew not how to blame her fondness ; nor where so much was amiable in its object, could he cease to wish that more were right.

* * * *

Thus again lived and died another week ; and the fourth succeeded with no actual occurrence, but a new change

change of opinion in Mrs. Arlbery, that forcibly and cruelly affected the feelings of Camilla.

Uninformed of the motive that occasioned the indifference with which Edgar beheld the newly awakened gallantry of Sir Sedley, and the pleasure with which Camilla received it, Mrs. Arlbery observed his total unconcern, first with surprise, next with perplexity, and finally with a belief he was seriously resolved against forming any connection with her himself. This she took an early opportunity to intimate to Camilla, warmly exhorting her to drive him fast from her mind.

Camilla assured her that no task could be more easy ; but the disappointment of the project with respect to Sir Sedley, which she blushed to have adopted, hurt her in every possible direction. Coquetry was as foreign to the ingenuousness of her nature, as to the dignity of all her early maternal precepts. She had hastily encouraged the devoirs of the Baronet, upon the recommendation of a woman she loved and admired ; but now that, the failure of her aim brought her to reflection, she felt penitent and ashamed to have heeded any advice so contrary to the singleness of the doctrines of her father, and so inferior to the elevation of every sentiment she had ever heard from her mother. If Edgar had seen her design, he had surely seen it with contempt : and though his manner was still the most gentle, and his advice ever ready and friendly, the opinion of Mrs. Arlbery was corroborated by all her own observations, that he was decidedly estranged from her.

What repentance ensued ! what severity of regret ! how did she canvass her conduct, how lament she had ever formed that fatal acquaintance with Mrs. Arlbery, which he had so early opposed, and which seemed eternally destined to lead her into measures and conduct most foreign to his approbation !

The melancholy that now again took possession of her spirits made her decline going abroad, from a renewed determination to avoid all meetings with Edgar. Mrs. Arlbery felt provoked to find his power thus unabated, and Sir Sedley was astonished. He still saw her perpetually, from his visits at Mount Pleasant ; but

his vanity, that weakest yet most predominant feature of his character, received a shock for which no modesty of apprehension or forethought had prepared him, in finding that, when he saw her no more in the presence of Mandlebert, he saw her no more the same. She was ready still to converse with him; but no peculiar attention was flattering, no desire to oblige was pointed. He found he had been merely a passive instrument, in her estimation, to excite jealousy; and even as such had been powerless to produce that effect. The raillery which Mrs. Arlbery spared not upon the occasion added greatly to his pique, and his mortification was so visible, that Camilla perceived it, and perceived it with pain, with shame, and with surprise. She thought now, for the first time, that the public homage he had paid her had private and serious motives, and that what she imagined mere sportive gallantry, arose from a growing attachment.

This idea had no gratifying power; believing Edgar without care for her, she could not hope it would stimulate his regard; and conceiving she had herself excited the partiality by wilful civilities, she could feel only reproach from a conquest, unduly, unfairly, uningenuously obtained.

In proportion as these self-upbraidings made her less deserving in her own eyes, the merits of the young Baronet seemed to augment; and in considering herself as culpable for having raised his regard, she appeared before him with a humility that gave a softness to her look and manners, which soon proved as interesting to Sir Sedley as her marked gaiety had been flattering.

When she perceived this, she felt distressed anew. To shun him was impossible, as Mrs. Arlbery not only gave him completely the freedom of her house, but assiduously promoted their belonging always to the same group, and being seated next to each other. There was nothing she would not have done to extenuate her error, and to obviate its ill effect upon Sir Sedley; but as she always thought herself in the wrong, and regarded him as injured, every effort was accompanied with a timidity

a timidity that gave to every change a new charm, rather than any repulsive quality.

In this state of total self-disapprobation, to return to Etherington was her only wish, and to pass the intermediate time with Mrs. Berlinton became her sole pleasure. But she was forced again into public to avoid an almost single intercourse with Sir Sedley.

In meeting again with Edgar she saw him openly delighted at her sight, but without the least apparent solicitude, or notice, that the young Baronet had passed almost the whole of the interval upon Mount Pleasant.

This was instantly noticed, and instantly commented upon by Mrs. Arlbery, who again, and strongly pointed out to Camilla, that to save her youth from being wasted by fruitless expectation, she must forget young Mandelbert, and study only her own amusement.

Camilla dissented not from the opinion; but the doctrine to which it was easy to agree, it was difficult to put in practice; and her ardent mind believed itself fettered for ever, and for ever unhappy.

C H A P. XXIII.

Traits of Instruction.

THE sixth and last week destined for the Tunbridge sojourn was begun, when Mrs. Arlbery once more took her fair young guest apart, and intreated her attention for one final half hour. The time, she said, was fast advancing in which they must return to their respective homes; but she wished to make a full and clear representation of the advantages that might be reaped from this excursion

excursion, before the period for gathering them should be past.

She would forbear, she said, entering again upon the irksome subject of the insensibility of Mandlebert, which was, at least, sufficiently glaring to prevent any delusion. But she begged leave to speak of what she believed had less obviously struck her, the apparent promise of a serious attachment from Sir Sedley Clarendel.

Camilla would here instantly have broken up the conversation, but Mrs. Arlbery insisted upon being heard.

"Why, she asked, should she wilfully destine her youth to a hopeless waste of affection, and dearth of all permanent comfort? To sacrifice every consideration to the honours of constancy, might be soothing, and even glorious in this first season of romance; but a very short time would render it vapid; and the epoch of repentance was always at hand to succeed. With the least address, or the least genuine encouragement, it was now palpable she might see Sir Sedley, and his title and fortune at her feet.

Camilla resentfully interrupted her, disclaiming with Sir Sedley, as with every one else, all possibility of alliance from motives so degrading; and persisted, in declaring, that the most moderate subsistence with freedom, would be preferable to the most affluent obtained by any mercenary engagement.

Mrs. Arlbery desired her to recollect that Sir Sedley, though rich even to splendour, was so young, so gay, so handsome, and so pleasant, that she might safely honour him with her hand, yet run no risk of being supposed to have made a mere interested alliance. "I throw out this," she cried, in conclusion, for your deepest consideration, but I must press it no further. Sir Sedley is evidently charmed with you at present; and his vanity is so potent, and, like all vanity, so easily assailable, that the smallest food to it, adroitly administered, would secure him your slave for life, and rescue you from the antediluvian courtship of a man, who, if he marries at all, is so deliberate in his progress, that

that he must reach his grand climacteric before he can reach the altar."

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Far from meditating upon this discourse with any view to following its precepts, Camilla found it necessary to call all her original fondness for Mrs. Arlbery to her aid, to forgive the plainness of her attack, or the worldliness of her notions: and all that rested upon her mind for consideration was, her belief in the serious regard of Sir Sedley, which, as she apprehended it to be the work of her own designed exertions, she could only think of with contrition.

These ruminations were interrupted by a call down stairs to see a learned bullfinch. The Dennels and Sir Sedley were present, she met the eyes of the latter with a sensation of shame that quickly deepened her whole face with crimson. He did not behold it without emotion, and experienced a strong curiosity to define its exact cause.

He addressed himself to her with the most marked distinction; she could scarcely answer him; but her manner was even touchingly gentle. Sir Sedley could not restrain himself from following her in every motion by his eyes; he felt an interest concerning her that surprised him; he began to doubt if it had been indifference which caused her late change; her softness helped his vanity to recover its tone, and her confusion almost confirmed him that Mrs. Arlbery had been mistaken in rallying his failure of rivalry with Mandlebert.

The bird sung various little airs, upon certain words of command, and mounted his highest, and descended to his lowest perch; and made whatever evolutions were within the circumference of his limited habitation, with wonderful precision.

Camilla, however, was not more pleased by his adroitness, than pained to observe the severe aspect with which his keeper issued his orders. She inquired by what means he had obtained such authority.

The

The man, with a significant wag of the head, brutally answered, "By the true old way, Miss; I licks him."

"Lick him!" repeated she, with disgust; how is it possible you can beat such a poor delicate little creature?"

"O, easy enough, Miss," replied the man, grinning; "every thing's the better for a little beating, as I tells my wife. There's nothing so fine set, Miss, but what will bear it, more or less."

Sir Sedley asked with what he could strike it, that would not endanger its life..

"That's telling, sir!" cried the man, with a sneer; "howbeit, we've plenty of ill luck in the trade. No want of that. For one that I rears, I loses six or seven. And sometimes they be so plaguy sulky, they tempt me to give 'em a knock a little matter too hard, and then they'll fall you into a fit, like, and go off in a twinkle."

"And how can you have the cruelty," cried Camilla, indignantly, "to treat in such a manner a poor little in offensive animal who does not understand what you require?"

"O, yes, a does, miss, they knows what I wants as well as I do myself; only they're so dead tiresome at being shy. Why now this one here, as does all his learning to satisfaction just now, mayhap wont' do nothing at all by an hour or two. Why sometimes you may pinch 'em to a mummy before you can make 'em budge."

"Pinch them!" exclaimed she; "do you ever pinch them?"

"Do I? Ay, miss. Why how do you think one larns them dumb creturs? It don't come to 'em natural. They are main dull of themselves. This one as you see here would do nothing at all, if he was not afraid of a tweak."

"Poor unhappy little thing!" cried she! "I hope, at least, now it has learnt so much, its sufferings are over!"

"Yes,

"Yes, yes, he's pretty well off. I always gives him his fill when he's done his day's work. But a little squeak now and then in the intrum does 'em no harm. They're mortal cunning. One's forced to be pretty tough with 'em."

"How should I rejoice," cried Camilla, "to rescue this one poor unoffending and oppressed little animal from such tyranny!" Then, taking out her purse, she desired to know what he would have for it.

The man, as a very great favour, said he would take ten guineas; though it would be his ruin to part with it, as it was all his livelihood; but he was willing to oblige the young lady.

Camilla, with a constrained laugh, but a very natural blush, put up her purse, and said: "Thou must linger on, then, in captivity, thou poor little undeserving sufferer, for I cannot help thee!"

Every body protested that ten guineas was an imposition; and the man offered to part with it for five.

Camilla, who had imagined it would have cost half a guinea, was now more ashamed, because equally incapable to answer such a demand; she declined, therefore, the composition, and the man was dismissed.

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At night, when she returned to her own room from the play, she saw the little bulfinch, reposing in a superb, cage, upon her table.

Delighted first, and next perplexed, she flew to Mrs. Arlbery, and inquired whence it came.

Mrs. Arlbery was as much amazed as herself.

Questions were then asked of the servants; but none knew, or none would own, how the bird became thus situated.

Camilla could not now doubt but Sir Sedley had given this commission to his servant, who could easily place the cage in her room, from his constant access to the house. She was enchanted to see the little animal relieved from so painful a life, but hesitated not a moment in resolving to refuse its acceptance.

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When Sir Sedley came the next day, she carried it down, and, with a smile of open pleasure, thanked him for giving her so much share in his generous liberality; and asked if he could take it home with him in his carriage, or, if she should send it to his hotel.

Sir Sedley was disappointed, yet felt the propriety of her delicacy and her spirit. He did not deny the step he had taken; but told her that having hastily, from the truth of reflection her compassion had awakened, ordered his servant to follow the man, and buy the bird, he had forgotten, till it arrived, his incapability of taking care of it. His valet was as little at home as himself, and there was small chance, at an inn, that any maid would so carefully watch, as to prevent its falling a prey to the many cats with which it was swarming. He hoped, therefore, till their return to Hampshire, she would take charge of a little animal that owed its deliverance from slavery to her pitying comments.

Camilla, instinctively, would with unfeigned joy, have accepted such a trust: but she thought she saw something archly significant in the eye of Mrs. Arlbery, and therefore stammered out, she was afraid she should herself be too little at home to secure its safety.

Sir Sedley, looking extremely blank, said, it would be better to re-deliver it to the man, brute as he was, than to let it be unprotected; but, where generosity touched Camilla, reflection ever flew her; and off all guard at such an idea, she exclaimed she would rather relinquish going out again while at Tunbridge, than render his humanity abortive; and ran off precipitately with the bird to her chamber.

Mrs. Arlbery, soon following, praised her behaviour; and said, she had sent the Baronet away perfectly happy.

Camilla, much provoked, would now have had the bird conveyed after him; but Mrs. Arlbery assured her, inconsistency in a woman was as flattering, as in a man it was tedious and alarming; and persuaded her to let the matter rest.

Her mind, however, did not rest at the same time: in the evening, when the Baronet met them at the
Rooms,

Rooms, he was not only unusually gay, but looked at her with an air and manner that seemed palpably to mark her as the cause of his satisfaction.

In the deepest disturbance, she considered herself now to be in a difficulty the most delicate; she could not come forward to clear it up, without announcing expectations from his partiality which he had never authorised by any declaration; nor yet suffer such symptoms of his believing it welcome to pass unnoticed, without risking the reproach of using him ill, when she made known, at a later period, her indifference.

Mrs. Arlbery would not aid her, for she thought the embarrassment might lead to a termination the most fortunate. To consult with Edgar was her first wish; but how open such a subject? The very thought, however, gave her an air of solicitude when he spoke to her, that struck him, and he watched for an opportunity to say, "You have not, I hope, forgotten my province?—May I, in my permitted office, ask a few questions?"

"O, yes!" cried she, with alacrity; "And, when they are asked, and when I have answered them, if you should not be too much tired, may I ask some in my turn?"

"Of me!" cried he, with the most gratified surprise.

"Not concerning yourself!" answered she, blushing; "but upon something which a little distresses me."

"When, and where may it be?" cried he, while a thousand conjectures rapidly succeeded to each other; "may I call upon Mrs. Arlbery to-morrow morning?"

"O, no! we shall be, I suppose, here again at night," she answered; dreading arranging a visit Mrs. Arlbery would treat, she knew, with raillery the most unmerciful.

There was time for no more, as that lady, suddenly tired, led the way to the carriage. Edgar followed her to the door, hoping and fearing, at once, every thing that was most interesting from a confidence so voluntary and so unexpected.

Camilla was still more agitated; for though uncertain if she were right or wrong in the appeal she meant to make, to converse with him openly, to be guided by his counsel, and to convince him of her superiority to all mercenary allurements were pleasures to make her look forward to the approaching conference with almost trembling delight.

C H A P. XXIV.

A Demander.

THE next night, as the carriage was at the door, and the party preparing for the Rooms, the name of Mr. Tyrold was announced, and Lionel entered the parlour.

His manner was hurried, though he appeared gay and frisky as usual; Camilla felt a little alarmed; but Mrs. Arlbery asked if he would accompany them.

With all his heart, he answered, only he must first have a moment's chat with his sister. Then, saying they should have a letter to write together, he called for a pen and ink, and was taking her into another apartment, when Mr. Dannel objected to letting his horses wait.

"Send them back for us, then," cried Lionel, with his customary ease, "and we will follow you."

Mr. Dannel again objected to making his horses so often mount the hill; but Lionel assured him nothing was so good for them, ran on with so many farrier words and phrases of the benefit they would reap from such light evening exercise, that, persuaded he was master of the subject, Mr. Dannel submitted, and the brother and sister were left tête-à-tête.

At any other time, Camilla would have proposed giving up the Rooms entirely: but her desire to see Edgar, and the species of engagement she had made with him, counterbalanced every inconvenience.

"My dear girl," said Lionel, "I am come to beg a favour. You see this pen and ink. Give me a sheet of paper."

She fetched him one.

"That's a good child," cried he, patting her cheek; "so now sit down, and write a short letter for me. Come begin. Dear Sir"

She wrote - Dear Sir.

"An unforeseen accident,—write on,—an unforeseen accident has reduced me to immediate distress for two hundred pounds——"

Camilla let her pen drop, and rising said, "Lionel! is this possible?"

"Very possible, my dear. You know I told you I wanted another hundred before you left Cleves. So you must account it only as one hundred, in fact, at present."

"O Lionel, Lionel!" cried Camilla, clasping her hands, with a look of more remonstrance than any words she durst utter.

"Won't you write the letter?" said he, pretending not to observe her emotion.

"To whom is it to be addressed?"

"My uncle, to be sure, my dear! What can you be thinking of? Are you in love, Camilla?"

"My uncle again? no Lionel, no!—I have solemnly engaged myself to apply to him no more"

"That was, for me, my dear; but where can your thoughts be wandering? Why you must ask for this, as if it were for yourself."

"For myself!"

"Yes, certainly. You know he won't give it else."

"Impossible! what should I want two hundred pounds for?"

"O, a thousand things; say you must have some new gowns and caps, and hats and petticoats, and all

those kind of gear. There is not the least difficulty; you can easily persuade him they are all worn out at such a place as this. Besides, I'll tell you what is still better; say you've been robbed; he'll soon believe it, for he thinks all public places filled with sharpers."

"Now you relieve me, said she, with a sort of fearful smile, "for I am sure you cannot be serious. You must be very certain I would not deceive or delude my uncle for a million of worlds."

"You know nothing of life, child, nothing at all. However, if you won't say that, tell him it's for a secret purpose. At least you can do that. And then, you can make him understand he must ask no questions about the matter. The money is all we want from him."

"This is so idle, Lionel, that I hope you speak it for mere nonsense. Who could demand such a sum, and refuse to account for its purpose?"

"Account, my dear! Does being an uncle give a man a right to be impertinent? If it does, marry out of hand yourself, there's a good girl, and have a family at once, that I may share the same privilege. I shall like it of all things; who will you have?"

"Pho, pho!"

"Major Cerwood?"

"No, never!"

"I once thought Edgar Mandlebert had a sneaking kindness for you. But I believe it is gone off. Or else I was out."

This was not an observation to exhilarate her spirits. She sighed: but Lionel, concluding himself the cause, begged her not to be low-spirited, but to write the letter at once.

She assured him she could never again consent to interfere in his unreasonable requests.

He was undone, then, he said; for he could not live without the money.

"Rather say, not with it," cried she; "for you keep nothing!"

"Nobody does, my dear; we all go on the same way now-a-days."

"And

"And what do you mean to be the end of it all, Lionel? How do you propose living when all these resources are completely exhausted?"

"When I am ruined, you mean? why how do other people live when they're ruined? I can but do the same; though I have not much considered the matter."

"Do consider it, then, dear Lionel! for all our sakes, do consider it!"

"Well,—let us see.—"

"O, I don't mean so; I don't mean just now; in this mere idle manner.—"

"O, yes, I'll do it at once, and then it will be over. Faith I don't well know. I have no great *gusto* for blowing out my brains. I like the little dears mighty well where they are. And I can't say I shall much relish to consume my life and prime and vigour in the king's bench prison. 'Tis horribly tiresome to reside always on the same spot. Nor I have no great disposition to whisk off to another country. Old England's a pretty place enough. I like it very well;—with a little rhino understood! But it's the very deuce, with an empty purse. So write the letter, my dear girl."

"And is this your consideration, Lionel? And is this its conclusion?"

"Why what signifies dwelling upon such dismalities? If I think upon my ruin beforehand, I am no nearer to enjoyment now than then. Live while we live, my dear girl! I hate prophesying horrors. Write, I say, write!"

Again she absolutely refused, pleading her promise to her uncle, and declaring she would keep her word.

"Keep a fiddlestick!" cried he, impatiently; "you don't know what mischief you may have to answer for! you may bring misery upon all our heads! you may make my father banish me his sight, you may make my mother execrate me!"

"Good Heavens!" cried Camilla interrupting him, "what is it you talk of? what is it you mean?"

"Just

"Just what I say; and to make you understand me better, I'll give you a hint of the truth; but you must lose your life twenty times before you reveal it—There's—there's—do you hear me?—there's a pretty girl in the case!"

"A pretty girl!—And what has that to do with this rapacity for money?"

"What an innocent question! why what a baby thou art, my dear Camilla?"

"I hope you are not forming any connexion unknown to my father?"

"Ha, ha, ha!" cried Lionel laughing loud: "Why thou hast lived in that old parsonage-house till thou art almost too young to be rocked in a cradle."

"If you are entering into an engagement," said she, still more gravely, "that my father must not know, and that my mother would so bitterly condemn,—why am I to be trusted with it?"

"You understand nothing of these things, child. 'Tis the very nature of a father to be an hunk, and of a mother to be a bore."

"O Lionel! such a father!—such a mother!—"

"As to their being perfectly good, and all that, I know it very well. And I am very sorry for it. A good father is a very serious misfortune to a poor lad like me, as the world runs; it causes one such confounded gripes of the conscience for every little awkward thing one does! A bad father would be the joy of my life; 'twould be all fair play there; the more he was choused the better."

"But this pretty girl, Lionel!—Are you serious? Are you really engaging yourself? And is she so poor? Is she so much distressed, that you require these immense and frequent sums for her?"

Lionel laughed again, and rubbed his hands; but after a short silence assumed a more steady countenance, and said, "Don't ask me any thing about her. It is not fit you should be so curious. And don't give a hint of the matter to a soul. Mind that! But as to the money,

ney, I must have it. And directly : I shall be blown to the deuce else."

"Lionel!" cried Camilla, shrinking. "you make me tremble! you cannot surely be so wicked—so unprincipled—No! your connexions are never worse than imprudent!—you would not else be so unkind, so injurious as to place in me such a confidence!"

The whole face of Lionel now flashed with shame, and he walked about the room, muttering: "'Tis true, I ought not to have done it." And soon after, with still greater concern he exclaimed: "If this appears to you in such a heinous light, what will my father think of it? And how can I bear to let it be known to my mother?"

"O never, never!" cried she emphatically; "never let it reach the knowledge of either! If indeed you have been so inconsiderate, and so wrong—break up, at least, any such intercourse before it offends their ears."

"But how, my dear, can I do that, if it gets blazed abroad?"

"Blazed abroad!"

"Yes; and for want, only, of a few pitiful guineas."

"What can you mean? how can it depend upon a few guineas?"

"Get me the guineas:—and leave the how to me."

"My dear Lionel," cried she, affectionately, "I would do any thing that is not absolute improper to serve you; but my uncle has now nothing more to spare; he has told me so himself; and with what courage, then, in this dark, mysterious, and, I fear, worse than mysterious business, can I apply to him?"

"My dear child, he only wants to hoard up his money to shew off poor Eugenia at her marriage; and you know as well as I do what a ninny he is for his pains; for what a poor little dowdy thing will she look, dizen'd out in jewels and laces?"

"Can

"Can you speak so of Eugenia? the most amiable, the most deserving, the most excellent creature breathing!"

"I speak it in pure friendship. I would not have her exposed. I love dear little Greek and Latin as well as you do. Only the difference is I don't talk so like an old woman; and really when you do it yourself, you can't think the ridiculous effect it has, when one looks at your young face. However, only write the request as if from yourself, and tell him you'll acquaint him with the reason next letter; but that the post is just going out now, and you have time for no more. And then, just coax him over a little, with, how you long to be back, and how you hate Tunbridge, and how you adore Cleves, and how tired you are for want of his bright conversation,—and you may command half his fortune.—My dear Camilla, you don't know from what destruction you will rescue me! Think too of my father, and what a shock you will save him: And think of my mother, whom I can never see again if you won't help me?"

Camilla sighed, but let him put the pen into her hand, whence, however, the very next moment's reflection was urging her to cast it down, when he caught her in his arms in a transport of joy, called her his protectress from dishonour and despair, and said he would run to the Rooms while she wrote, just to take the opportunity of seeing them, and to un-order the carriage, that she might have no interruption to her composition, which he would come back to claim before the party returned, as he must set off for Cleves, and gallop all night, to procure the money, which the loss of a single day would render useless.

All this he uttered with a rapidity that mocked every attempt at expostulation or answer: and then ran out of the room and out of the house.

* * * *

Horror at such perpetual and increasing ill conduct, grief at the compulsive failure of meeting Edgar, and perplexity how to extricate herself from her half given, but

but wholly seized upon engagement to write, took for a while nearly equally shares in tormenting Camilla. But all presently concentrated in one domineering sentiment of sharp repentance for what she had apparently undertaken.

To claim two hundred pounds of her uncle, in her own name, was out of all question. She could not, even a moment, dwell upon such a project; but how represent what she herself so little understood as the necessity of Lionel? or how ask for so large a sum, and postpone, as he desired, all explanation? She was incapable of any species of fraud. she detested even the most distant disguise. Simple supplication seemed therefore, her only method; but so difficult was even this, in an affair so dark and unconscionable, that she began twenty letters without proceeding in any one of them beyond two lines.

Thus far, however, her task was light to what it appeared to her upon a little further deliberation. That her brother had formed some unworthy engagement or attachment; he had not, indeed, avowed clearly, but he had by no means denied, and she had even omitted, in her surprise and consternation, exacting his promise that it should immediately be concluded. What, then, might she be doing by endeavouring to procure this money? Aiding perhaps vice and immorality, and assisting her misguided, if not guilty brother, to persevere in the most dangerous errors, if not crimes?

She shuddered, she pushed away her paper, she rose from the table, she determined not to write another word.

Yet, to permit parents she justly revered to suffer any evil she had the smallest chance to spare them, was dreadful to her; and what evil could be inflicted upon them, so deeply, so lastingly severe, as the conviction of any serious vices in any of their children?

This, for one minute, brought her again to the table; but the next, her better judgment pointed out the shallowness and fallacy of such reasoning. To save them present pain at the risk of future anguish, to consult the feelings of her brother, in preference to his morality,

K 3

would

would be forgetting every lesson of her life, which from its earliest dawn, had imbibed a love of virtue, that made her consider whatever was offensive to it as equally disgusting and unhappy.

To disappoint Lionel was, however, terrible. She knew well he would be deaf to remonstrance, ridicule all argument, and laugh off whatever she could urge by persuasion. She feared he would be quite outrageous to find his expectations thus thwarted; and the lateness of the hour when he would hear it, and the weight he annexed to obtaining the money expeditiously, redoubled at once her regret for her momentary compliance, and her pity for what he would undergo through its failure.

After considering in a thousand ways how to soften to him her recantation, she found herself so entirely without courage to encounter his opposition, that she resolved to write him a short letter, and then retire to her room, to avoid an interview.

In this, she besought him to forgive her error in not sooner being sensible of her duty, which had taught her, upon her first reflexion, the impossibility of demanding two hundred pounds for herself, who wanted nothing, and the impracticability of demanding it for him, in so unintelligible a manner.

Thus far only she had proceeded, from the length of time consumed in regret and rumination, when a violent ringing at the door, without the sound of any carriage, made her start up, and fly to her chamber; leaving her unfinished letter, with the beginnings of her several essays to address Sir Hugh, upon the table, to shew her various efforts, and to explain that they were relinquished.

C H A P. XXV.

An Accorder.

THUS, self-confined and almost in an agony, Camilla remained for a quarter of an hour, without any species of interruption, and in the greatest amazement that Lionel forbore pursuing her, either with letter or message.

Another violent ringing at the bell, but still without any carriage, then excited her attention, and presently the voice and steps of Lionel resounded upon the stairs, whence her name was with violence vociferated.

She did not move; and in another minute he was rapping at her chamber door, demanding admittance, or that she would instantly descend.

Alarmed for her open letter and papers, she enquired who was in the parlour.

"Not a soul," he answered; "I have left them all at the Rooms."

"Have you returned, then, twice?"

"No. I should have been here sooner, but I met two or three old cronies, that would not part with me. Come, where's your letter?"

"Have you not seen what I have written?"

Down upon this intimation he flew, without any reply; but was presently back, saying he found nothing in the parlour, except a letter to herself.

Affrighted, she followed him; but not one of her papers remained. The table was cleared, and nothing was to be seen but a large packet, addressed to her in a hand she did not know.

She rang to enquire who had been in the house before her brother.

The servant answered, only Sir Sedley Clarendel, who he thought had been there still, as he had said he should wait till Mrs. Arlbery came home.

"Is

"Is it possible," cried she, "that a gentleman such as Sir Sedley Clarendel, can have permitted himself to touch my papers?"

Lionel agreed that it was shocking; but said the loss of time to himself was still worse; without suffering her, therefore, to open her packet, he insisted that she should write another letter directly; adding, he had met the Baronet in his way from the Rooms, but had little suspected whence he came, or how he had been amusing himself.

Camilla now hung about her brother in the greatest tribulation, but refused to take the pen he would have put into her hands, and, at last, not without tears, said: "Forgive me, Lionel! but the papers you ought to have found would have explained—that I cannot write for you to my uncle."

Lionel heard this with the indignation of an injured man. He was utterly, he said, lost; and his family would be utterly disgraced, for ruin must be the lot of his father, or exile or imprisonment must be his own, if she persisted in such unkind and unnatural conduct.

Terrour now bereft her of all speech or motion, till the letter, which Lionel had been beating about in his agitation, without knowing or caring what he was doing, burst open, and some written papers fell to the floor, which she recognised for her own.

Much amazed, she seized the cover, which had only been fastened by a wafer that was still wet, and saw a letter within it to herself, which she hastily read, while a paper that was enclosed dropt down, and was caught by Lionel.

To Miss Camilla Tyrold.

FORGIVE, fairest Camilla, the work of the Destinies. I came hither to see if illness detained you; the papers which I enclose from other curious eyes caught mine by accident. The pathetic sisterly address has touched me. I have not the honour to know Mr. Lionel Tyrold; let our acquaintance begin with an act of confidence

fidence on his part, that must bind to him for ever his lovely sister's

Most obedient and devoted

SEDLEY CLARENDEL.

The loose paper, picked up by Lionel, was a draft, upon a banker, for two hundred pounds.

While this, with speechless emotion, was perused by Camilla, Lionel, with unbounded joy, began jumping, skipping, leaping over every chair, and capering round and round the room in an ecstasy.

"My dearest Lionel," cried she, when a little recovered, "why such joy? you cannot suppose it possible this can be accepted."

"Not accepted, child? do you think me out of my senses? Don't you see me freed from all my misfortunes at once? and neither my father grieved, nor my mother offended, nor poor numps fleeced?"

"And when can you pay it? And what do you mean to do? And to whom will be the obligation? Weigh, weigh a little all this."

Lionel heard her not; his rapture was too buoyant for attention, and he whisked every thing out of its place, from frantic merriment, till he put the apartment into so much disorder, that it was scarce practicable to stir a step in it; now and then interrupting himself to make her low bows, scraping his feet all over the room, and obsequiously saying: "My sister Clarendel! How does your La'ship do? my dear Lady Clarendel, pray afford me your La'ship's countenance."

Nothing could be less pleasant to Camilla than railery which pointed out, that, even by the unreflecting Lionel, this action could be ascribed but to one motive. The draft, however, had fallen into his hands, and neither remonstrance nor petition, neither representation of impropriety nor persuasion, could induce him to relinquish it; he would only dance, sing, and pay her grotesque homage, till the coach stopt at the door; and then, ludicrously hoping her Ladyship would excuse his leaving her, for once, to play the part of the house-

house-maid in setting the room to rights, he sprang past them all, and bounded down the hill.

Mrs. Arlbery was much diverted by the confusion in the parlour, and Miss Dannel asked a thousand questions why the chairs and tables were all thrown down, the china jars removed from the chimney-piece into the middle of the room, and the side board apparatus put on the chimney-piece in their stead.

Camilla was too much confounded either to laugh or explain, and hastily wishing them good-night, retired to her chamber.

Here, in the extremest perturbation, she saw the full extent of her difficulties, without perceiving any means of extrication. She had no hope of recovering the draft from Lionel, whom she had every reason to conclude already journeying from Tunbridge. What could she say the next day to Sir Sedley? How account for so sudden, so gross an acceptance of pecuniary obligation? What inference might he not draw? And how could she undeceive him, while retaining so improper a mark of his dependence upon her favour? The displeasure she felt that he should venture to suppose she would owe to him such a debt, rendered but still more palpable the species of expectation it might authorise.

To destroy this illusion occupied all her attention, except what was imperiously seized upon by regret of missing Edgar, with whom to consult was more than her wish.

In this disturbed state, when she saw Mrs. Arlbery the next morning, her whole care was to avoid being questioned: and that lady, who quickly perceived her fears by her avoidance, took the first opportunity to say to her, with a laugh, "I see I must make no enquiries into the gambols of your brother last night: but I may put together, perhaps, certain circumstances that may give me a little light to the business: and if, as I conjecture, Clarendel spoke out to him, his wildest rioting is more rational than his sister's gravity."

Camilla protested they had not conversed together at all.

"Nay

“Nay, then I own myself still in the dark. But I observed that Clarendel left the Rooms at a very early hour, and that your brother almost immediately followed.”

Camilla ventured not any reply; and soon after retreated.

Mrs. Arlbery, in a few minutes, pursuing her, laughingly, and with sportive reproach, accused her of intending to steal a march to the altar of Hymen; as she had just been informed, by her maid, that Sir Sedley had actually been at the house last night, during her absence.

Camilla seriously assured her, that she was in her chamber when he arrived, and had not seen him.

“For what in the world, then, could he come? He was sure I was not at home, for he had left me at the Rooms?”

Camilla again was silent; but her tingling cheeks proclaimed it was not for want of something to say. Mrs. Arlbery forbore to press the matter further; but forbore with a nod that implied *I see how it is!* and a smile that published the pleasure and approbation which accompanied her self-conviction.

The vexation of Camilla would have prompted an immediate confession of the whole mortifying transaction, had she not been endued with a sense of honour, where the interests of others was concerned, that repressed her natural precipitance, and was more powerful even than her imprudence.

She waited the greatest part of the morning in some little faint hope of seeing Lionel: but he came not, and she spent the rest of it with Mrs. Berlington. She anxiously wished to meet Edgar in the way, to apologise for her non-appearance the preceding evening; but this did not happen; and her concern was not lessened by reflecting upon the superior interest in her health and welfare, marked by Sir Sedley, who had taken the trouble to walk from the Rooms to Mount Pleasant to see what was become of her.

She

She returned home but barely in time to dress for dinner, and was not yet ready, when she saw the carriage of the Baronet drive up to the door.

In the most terrible confusion how to meet him, what to say about the draft, how to mention her brother, whether to seem resentful of the liberty he had so unceremoniously taken, or thankful for its kindness, she had scarce the force to attire herself, nor, when summoned down stairs, to descend.

This distress was but increased upon her entrance, by the sight and the behaviour of the Baronet; whose address to her was so marked, that it covered her with blushes, and whose air had an assurance that spoke a species of secret triumph. Offended as well as frightened, she looked every way to avoid him, or assumed a look of haughtiness, when forced by any direct speech to answer him. She soon, however, saw, by his continued self complacency, and even an increase of gaiety, that he only regarded this as coquetry, or bashful embarrassment, since every time she attempted thus to rebuff him, an arch smile stole over his features, that displayed his different conception of her meaning.

She now wished nothing so much as a prompt and positive declaration, that she might convince him of his mistake and her rejection. For this purpose, she subdued her desire of retreat, and spent the whole afternoon with Mrs. Arlbery and the Dennels in his company.

Nevertheless, when Mrs. Arlbery, who had the same object in view, though with a different conclusion, contrived to draw her other guests out of the apartment and to leave her alone with Sir Sedley, modesty and shame both interfered with her desire of an explanation, and she was hastily retiring; but the Baronet, in a gentle voice, called after her, "Are you going?"

"Yes; I have forgotten something.--"

"He rose to follow her, with a motion that seemed purporting to take her hand; but, gliding quickly on, she prevented him, and was almost at the same moment in her own chamber.

With

With augmented severity, she now felt the impropriety of an apparent acceptance of so singular and unpleasant an obligation, which obviously misled Sir Sedley to believe her at his command.

Shocked in her delicacy, and stung in her best notions of laudable pride, she could not rest without destroying this humiliating idea; and resolved to apply to Edgar for the money, and to pay the Baronet the next day. Her objections to betraying the extravagance of Lionel, though great and sincere, yielded to the still more dangerous evil of letting Sir Sedley continue in an error, that might terminate in branding her in his opinion, with a character of inconsistency or duplicity.

Edgar, too, so nearly a brother to them both, would guard the secret of Lionel better, in all probability, than he would guard it himself; and could draw no personal inferences from the trust and obligation, when he found its sole incitement was sooner to owe an obligation to a ward of her father, than to a new acquaintance of her own.

Pleased at the seeming necessity of an application that would lead so naturally to a demand of the counsel she languished to claim, she determined not to suffer Sir Sedley to wait even another minute under his mistake; but, since she now could speak of returning the money, to take courage for meeting what might either precede or ensue in a conference.

Down, therefore, she went; but as she opened the parlour door, she heard Sir Sedley say to Mrs. Arlbery, who had just entered before her: "O, fie! fie! you know she will be cruel to excruciation! you know me destined to despair to the last degree."

Camilla, whose so speedy re-appearance was the last sight he expected, was too far advanced to retreat; and the resentment that tinged her whole complexion shewed she had heard what he said, and had heard it with an application the most offensive.

An immediate sensibility to his own impertinence now succeeded in its vain display; he looked not merely concerned, but contrite; and, in a voice softened nearly to timidity, attempted a general conversation, but
kept

kept his eyes, with an anxious expression, almost continually fixed upon her's.

Anger with Camilla was a quick, but short-lived sensation; and this sudden change in the Baronet from conceit to respect, produced a change equally sudden in herself from disdain to inquietude. Though mortified in the first moment by his vanity, it was less seriously painful to her than any belief that under it was couched a disposition towards a really steady regard. With Mrs. Arlbery she was but slightly offended, though certain she had been assuring him of all the success he could demand. her way of thinking upon the subject had been openly avowed, and she did justice to the kindness of her motives.

No opportunity, however, arose to mention the return of the draft; Mrs. Arlbery saw displeasure in her air, and not doubting she had heard what had dropt from Sir Sedley, thought the moment unfavourable for a *tête-à-tête*, and resolutely kept her place, till Camilla herself, weary of useless waiting, left the room.

Following her then to her chamber, "My dear Miss Tyrold," she cried, "do not let your extreme youth stand in the way of all your future life. A Baronet, rich, young, and amiable, is upon the very point of becoming your slave for ever; yet, because you discover him to be a little restive in the last agonies of his liberty, you are eager, in the high-flown disdain of juvenile susceptibility, to cast him and his fortune away; as if both were such every-day baubles, that you might command or reject them without thought of future consequence."

"Indeed no, dear madam; I am not actuated by pride or anger; I owe too much to Sir Sedley to feel either above a moment, even where I think them—pardon me!—justly excited. But I should ill pay my debt, by accepting a lasting attachment, where certain I can return nothing but lasting, eternal, unchangeable indifference."

"You sacrifice, then, both him and yourself, to the fanciful delicacy of a first love?"

"No,

"No, indeed!" cried she blushing. "I have no thought at all but of the single life. And I sincerely hope Sir Sedley has no serious intentions towards me; for my obligations to him are so infinite, I should be cruelly hurt to appear to him ungrateful."

"You would appear to him, I confess, a little surprising," said Mrs. Arlbery, laughing; "for diffidence certainly is not his weak part. However, with all his foibles, he is a charming creature, and prepossession only can blind you to his merit."

Camilla again denied the charge, and strove to prevail with her to undeceive the Baronet from any false expectations. But she protested she would not be accessory to so much after-repentance; and left her.

The business now wore a very serious aspect to Camilla. Mrs. Arlbery avowed she thought Sir Sedley in earnest, and he knew she had herself heard him speak with security of his success. The bullfinch had gone far, but the draft seemed to have riveted the persuasion. The bird it was now impossible to return till her departure from Tunbridge; but she resolved not to defer another moment putting upon her brother alone the obligation of the draft, to stop the further progress of such dangerous inference.

Hastily, therefore, she wrote to him the following note:

To Sir Sedley Clarendel, Bart.

SIR,

SOME particular business compelled my brother so abruptly to quit Tunbridge, that he could not have the honour to first wait upon you with his thanks for the loan you so unexpectedly put into his hands; by mine, however, all will be restored to-morrow morning, except his gratitude for your kindness.

I am, sir, in both our names,
your obliged humble servant,

CAMILLA TYROLD.

MOUNT PLEASANT,
Thursday Evening.

She

She now waited till she was summoned down stairs to the carriage, and then gave her little letter to a servant, whom she desired to deliver it to Sir Sedley's man.

Sir Sedley did not accompany them to the Rooms, but promised to follow.

Camilla, on her arrival, with palpitating pleasure, looked round for Edgar. She did not, however, see him. She was accosted directly by the Major; who, as usual, never left her, and whose assiduity to seek her favour seemed increased.

She next joined Mrs. Berlington; but still she saw nothing of Edgar. Her eyes incessantly looked towards the door, but the object they sought never met them.

When Sir Sedley entered, he joined the group of Mrs. Berlington.

Camilla tried to look at him and to speak to him with her customary civility and cheerfulness, and nearly succeeded; while in him she observed only an expressive attention, without any marks of presumption.

Thus began and thus ended the evening. Edgar never appeared.

Camilla was in the utmost amaze and deepest vexation. Why did he stay away? was his wrath so great at her own failure the preceding night, that he purposely avoided her? what, also, could she do with Sir Sedley? how meet him the next morning without the draft she had now promised?"

In this state of extreme chagrin, when she retired to her chamber, she found the following letter upon her table:

To Miss Camilla Tyrold.

CAN you think of such a trifle? or deem wealth so truly contemptible, as to deny it all honourable employment? Ah, rather, enchanting Camilla! deign further to aid me in dispensing it worthily!

SEDLEY CLARENDEL.

Camilla now was touched, penetrated, and distressed beyond what she had been in any former time. She
looked

looked upon this letter as a positive intimation of the most serious designs; and all his good qualities, as painted by Mrs. Arlbery, with the very singular obligation she owed to him, rose up formidably to support the arguments and remonstrances of that lady; though every feeling of her heart, every sentiment of her mind, and every wish of her soul, opposed their smallest weight.

C H A P. XXVI.

An Helper.

THE next morning, as Camilla had accompanied Mrs. Berlinton, in earnest discourse, from her chamber to the hall, she heard the postman say Miss Tyrold as he gave in a letter. She seized it, saw the handwriting of Lionel, and ran eagerly into the parlour, which was empty, to read it, in some hopes it would at least contain an acknowledgment of the draft, that might be shewn to Sir Sedley, and relieve her from the pain of continuing the principal in such an affair.

The letter, however, was merely a sportive rhapsody, beginning; *My dear Lady Clarendel*; desiring her favour and protection, and telling her he had done what he could for her honour, by adding two trophies to the victorious car of Hymen, driven by the happy Baronet.

Wholly at a loss how to act, she sat ruminating over this letter, till Mrs. Arlbery opened the door. Having no time to fold it, and dreading her seeing the first words, she threw her handkerchief, which was then in her hand, over it, upon the table, hoping presently to draw it away unperceived.

“ My

"My dear friend," said Mrs. Arlbery, "I am glad to see you a moment alone. Do you know any thing of Mandiebert?"

"No!" answered she affrighted, lest any evil had happened.

"Did he not take leave of you at the rooms the other night?"

"Leave of me? is he gone any where!"

"He has left Tunbridge."

Camilla remained stupified.

"Left it," she continued, "without the poor civility to call, to ask if you had any letters or messages for Hampshire"

Camilla coloured high; she felt to her heart this evident coldness, and she knew it to be still more marked than Mrs. Arlbery could divine; for he was aware she wished particularly to speak with him; and though she had failed in her appointment, he had not inquired why.

"And this is the man for whom you would relinquish all mankind? this is the grateful character who is to render you insensible to every body?"

The disturbed mind of Camilla needed not this speech; her debt to Sir Sedley, cast wholly upon herself by the thoughtless Lionel; her inability to pay it, the impressive lines the Baronet had addressed to her, and the cruel and pointed indifference of Edgar, all forcibly united to make her wish, at this moment, her heart at her own disposal.

In a few minutes, the voice of Sir Sedley, gaily singing, caught her ear. He was entering the hall, the street door being open. She started up; Mrs. Arlbery would have detained her, but she could not endure to encounter him, and without returning his salutation, or listening to his address, crossed him in the hall, and flew up stairs.

There, however, she had scarcely taken breath, when she recollected the letter which she had left upon the table, and which the afflicting intelligence that Edgar had quitted Tunbridge, had made her forget she had received. In a terror immeasurable, lest her handkerchief

chief should be drawn aside, and betray the first line, she re-descended the stairs, and hastily entered the room. Her shock was then inexpressible. The handkerchief, which her own quick motion in retiring had displaced, was upon the floor, the letter was in full view; the eyes of Sir Sedley were fixed upon his own name, with a look indefinable between pleasure and impertinence, and Mrs. Arlbery was laughing with all her might.

She seized the letter, and was running away with it, when Mrs. Arlbery slipped out of the room, and Sir Sedley, shutting the door, half archly half tenderly repeated, from the letter, "My dear Lady Clarendel!"

In a perfect agony, she hid her face, exclaiming: "O Lionel! my foolish—cruel brother!"—

"Not foolish, not cruel, I think him," cried Sir Sedley, taking her hand, "but amiable—he has done honour to my name, and he will use it, I hope, henceforth, as his own."

"Forget, forget his flippancy," cried she, withdrawing impatiently her hand; "and pardon his sister's breach of engagement for this morning. I hope soon, very soon, to repair it, and I hope—"

She did not know what to add; she stopt, stammered, and then endeavoured to make her retreat.

"Do not go," cried he, gently detaining her; "incomparable Camilla! I have a thousand things to say to you. Will you not hear them?"

"No!" cried she, disengaging herself; "no, no, no! I can hear nothing! —"

"Do you fascinate then, said he, half reproachfully, "like the rattlesnake, only to destroy?"

Camilla conceived this as alluding to her recent encouragement, and stood trembling with expectation it would be followed by a claim upon her justice.

But Sir Sedley, who was far from any meaning so pointed, lightly added, "What thus agitates the fairest of creatures? can she fear a poor captive entangled in the witchery of her loveliness, and only the more enslaved the more he struggles to get free!"

"Let

"Let me go," cried she, eager to stop him; "I beseech you, Sir Sedley!"

"All beauteous Camilla!" said he, retreating yet still so as to intercept her passage; "I am bound to submit; but when may I see you again?"

"At any time," replied she hastily; "only let me pass now!"

"At any time! adorable Camilla! be it then tonight! be it this evening!—be it at noon—be it—"

"No, no, no, no!" cried she, panting with shame and alarm; "I donot mean at any time! I spoke without thought—I mean—"

"Speak so ever and anon," cried he, "if thought is my enemy! This evening then—"

He stopt, as if irresolute how to finish his phrase, but soon added: "Adieu, till this evening, adieu!" and opened the door for her to pass.

Triumph sat in his eye; exultation spoke in every feature; yet his voice betrayed constraint, and seemed checked, as if from fear of entrusting it with his sentiments. The fear, however, was palpably not of diffidence with respect to Camilla, but of indecision with regard to himself.

Camilla, almost sinking with shame now hung back, from a dread of leaving him in this dangerous delusion. She sat down, and in a faltering voice, said: "Sir Sedley! hear me, I beg!—"

"Hear you," cried he, gallantly casting himself at her feet; "yes! from the fervid rays of the sun, to the mild lustre of the moon!—from—"

A loud knock at the street door, and a ringing at the same time at the bell, made him rise, meaning to shut again the door of the parlour; but he was prevented, by the entrance of a man into the hall, calling out, in a voice that reached to every part of the house, "An express for Miss Camilla Tyrold."

Camilla started up, concluding it some strange intelligence concerning Edgar. But a letter was put into her hand, and she saw it was the writing of Lavinia.

It was short, but most affectionate. It told her that news was just arrived from the Continent, which gave reason

reason for hourly expectation of their cousin Lynmere at Cleves, in consequence of which Sir Hugh was assembling all the family to receive him. She was then, with her father, going thither from Etherington, where the restored health of her uncle had, for a week past, enabled them to reside, and she was ordered to send off an express to Tunbridge, to beg Camilla would prepare immediately for the post-chaise of Sir Hugh, which would be sent for her, with the Cleves house-keeper, and reach Mount Pleasant within a few hours after this notice.

A hundred questions assailed Camilla when she had run over this letter, the noise of the express having brought Mrs. Arlbery and the Dennels into the parlour.

She produced the letter, and putting it in the hands of Mrs. Arlbery, relieved her painful confusion, by quitting the room without again meeting the eyes of Sir Sedley.

She could make no preparation, however, for her journey, from mingled desire and fear of an explanation with the Baronet before her departure.

Again, therefore, in a few minutes she went down; gathering courage from the horror of a mistake that might lead to so much mischief.

She found only Mrs. Arlbery in the parlour.

Involuntarily starting, "Where," she cried, "is Sir Sedley?"

"He is gone," answered Mrs. Arlbery, laughing at her earnestness; "but no doubt you will soon see him at Cleves."

"Then I am undone!" cried she, bursting into tears and running back to her chamber.

Mrs. Arlbery instantly followed, and kindly inquired what disturbed her.

"O, Mrs. Arlbery!" she cried, "lend me, I beseech you, some aid, and spare me, in pity, your raillery! Sir Sedley, I fear, greatly mistakes me; set him right, I conjure you—"

"Me, my dear? and do you think if some happy fatality is at work at this moment to force you to your good,

I will come forth, like your evil genius, to counteract its operations?"

"I must write then,—yet, in this haste, this confusion, I fear to involve rather than extricate myself!"

"Ay, write by all means; there is nothing so prettily forwards these affairs, as a correspondence between the parties undertaken to put an end to them."

She went, laughing, out of the chamber, and Camilla, who had seized a pen, distressfully flung it from her.

What indeed could she say? he had made no direct declaration; she could give, therefore, no direct repulse; and though, through her brother's cruel want of all consideration, she was so deeply in his debt, she durst no longer promise its discharge; for the strange departure of Edgar robbed her of all courage to make to him her meditated application.

Yet to leave Sir Sedley in this error was every way terrible. If, which still seemed very possible, from his manner and behaviour, he should check his partiality, and make the whole of what had passed end in mere public-place gallantry, she must always have the mortification to know he had considered her as ready to accept him: If, on the contrary, encouraging what he felt for her, from the belief she returned his best opinion, he should seriously demand her hand—how could she justify the apparent attention she once paid him? and how assert, while so hopelessly his debtor, the independence to reject one who so many ways seemed to hold himself secure!

* * * *

She was broken in upon by Mrs. Mittin, who entered full of lamentation at the intelligence she had just heard from Miss Dannel of her sudden departure; which she ended with, "But as you are going in such haste, my dear, you must have fifty things to do, so pray now, let me help you. Come, what shall I pack up for you? Where's all your things?"

Camilla,

Camilla, incapable of doing any business for herself, accepted the offer.

"Well then, now where's your gowns? Bless me! what a one is here? why it's been in the dew, and then in the dust, and then in the dew again, till all the bottom must be cut off; why you can never shew it amongst your friends; it will quite bring a disgrace upon poor Tunbridge; come, I think you must give it to me; I've got a piece of muslin just like it, and I can piece it so that it won't appear; but it will never do for you again."

Camilla was surprised; but her mind was filled with other matters, and the gown was put apart.

"What! are those all your neck handkerchiefs? why, my dear Miss Tyrold, that's a thing you want very bad indeed; why here's one you can never wear again; it wants more darning than it's worth."

Camilla said she should have very good time to mend it at home.

"But then, my dear, you don't consider what a bad look that will have amongst your friends; what will they think of poor Tunbridge, that you should have let it go so far? why, may be they'll never let you come again; the best way will be not to let them see it; suppose I take it off your hands? I dare say they don't know your count."

At any other time, Camilla would either have resisted these seizures, or have been diverted by the pretence that they were made only for her own benefit; but she was now glad at any rate to get rid of the care of the package.

When this was over, and Mrs. Mittin had pretty well paid herself for her trouble: "Well, my dear," she cried, "and what can I do for you next? Have you paid Mrs. Tilldin, and Mr. Doust, and Mr. Tent?"

These were questions that indeed roused Camilla from her reverie; she had not once thought of what she owed to the milliner, to her shoemaker, nor to her haberdasher; from all of whom she had now, through the hands of Mrs. Mittin, had various articles. She thanked

ed her for reminding her of so necessary an attention, and said she would immediately send for the bills.

"I'll run and pay 'em for you myself," said Mrs. Mittin; "for they always take that kind; and as I recommended them all to you, I have a right they should know how I stand their friend; for there's many an odd service they may do me in return; so I'll go for you with all my heart; only give me the money."

Camilla took out her purse, in which, from her debt to Sir Sedley, and perpetually current expences, there now remained but fifteen shillings of her borrowed five guineas; though latterly, she had wholly denied herself whatever did not seem an expence unavoidable. What to do she now knew not; for though all she had ordered had been trifling, she was sure it must amount to four or five guineas. She had repeatedly refused to borrow any thing more of Mrs. Arlbery, always hoping every call for money would be the last; but she was too inexperienced to know, that in gay circles, and public places, the demands for wealth are endless and countless; and that œconomy itself, which is always local, is there lavish and extravagant, compared with its character, in private scenes and retired life.

Yet was this the last moment to apply to Mrs. Arlbery upon such a subject, since it would be endowing her with fresh arms to fight the cause of Sir Sedley. She sat still, and ruminating, till Mrs. Mittin, who without scruple had taken a full inventory of the contents of the purse, exclaimed: "La! my dear, why sure I hope that i'n't all you've got left?"

Camilla was fain to confess she had nothing more at Tunbridge.

"Well, don't be uneasy, my dear," cried she, "and I'll go to 'em all, and be caution for you, till you get the money."

Camilla thanked her very sincerely, and again resumed her first opinion of her real good nature, and kindness of heart. She took her direction in London, whither she was soon to return, and promised, in a short time, to transmit the money for her to distribute,

as every one of the shop-keepers went to the metropolis in the winter.

Delighted both with the praise and the commission, Mrs. Martin took leave; and Camilla determined to employ her next quarter's allowance in paying these debts, and frankly to beg from her uncle the five guineas that were due to Mrs. Arlbery.

She then wrote an affectionate adieu to Mrs. Bertinton, entreating to hear from her at Etherington; and, while she was sealing it, Mrs. Arlbery came to embrace her, as the carriage was at the door.

Camilla, in making her acknowledgments for the kindness she had received, intermingled a petition, that at least, she would not augment, if she refused to clear the mistake of Sir Sedley.

"I believe he may safely," she answered, "be left to himself; though it is plain that, at this moment, he is in a difficulty as great as your own; for marriage he still resists, though he finds you resistless. I wish you mutually to be parted till—pardon me, my fair friend—your understandings are mutually cleared, and he is divested of what is too factitious, and you of what is too artless. Your situation is, indeed rather whimsical; for the two mortals with whom you have to deal require treatment diametrically opposite; yet humour them a little adroitly, and you presently gain them both. He that is proud, must be distanced; he that is vain, must be flattered. This is paying them with their own coin; but they hold no other to be current. Pride, if not humbled, degenerates into contempt; vanity, if not indulged, dissolves into indifference."

Camilla disclaimed taking any measures with respect to either; but Mrs. Arlbery insisted the field would be won by Sir Sedley, "who is already," she cried, "persuaded you have for some time encouraged him, and that now you are fully propitious—"

Camilla hastily interrupted her: "O, Mrs. Arlbery!" she cried, "I cannot endure this! add not to my disturbance by making it my own work!"

She

She then embraced her ; took leave of the Dennels, and with the house keeper of Sir Hugh set out from Tunbridge for Cleves.

C H A P. XXVII.

The right Style of Arguing.

CAMILLA was received with the most tender joy by all her family, again re-assembled at Cleves to welcome the return of young Lynmere, who was expected every hour. Sir Hugh, perfectly recovered from his late illness, and busy, notwithstanding all remonstrance, in preparation for the approaching nuptials, was in spirits that exhilarated whoever saw him. Eugenia awaited that event with gentleness, though with varying sensations ; from fears, lest her personal misfortunes should prove repulsive to Clermont, and from wishes to find him resembling Melmond in talents, and Bellamy in passion and constancy.

Dr. Orkborne gave now his lessons with redoubled assiduity, from an ambition to produce to the scholastic traveller, a phenomenon of his own workmanship in a learned young female : nor were his toils less ready, nor less pleasant, for a secret surmise they would shortly end ; though not till honour should be united with independence, for his recompence. But Miss Margland fretted, that this wedding would advance no London journey ; and Indiana could not for a moment recover from her indignation, that the deformed and ugly Eugenia, though two years younger than herself, should be married before her. Lavinia had no thought but for the happiness of her sister ; and Mr. Tyrold lamented the absence of his wife, who, alike from understanding and

and affection, was the only person to properly superintend this affair, but from whom Dr. Marchmont, just arrived, brought very faint hopes of a speedy return.

Eugenia, however, was not the sole care of her father, at this period. The countenance of Camilla soon betrayed, to his inquiring eyes, the inefficacy of the Tunbridge journey. But he forbore all question; and left to time or her choice to unravel, if new incidents kept alive her inquietude, or, if no incident at all had been equally prejudicial to her repose.

* * * *

Two days after, while Camilla, still astonished by no news, nor sight of Edgar, was sitting with her sisters, and recounting to them her late adventures, and present difficulties, with Sir Sedley Clarendel, Jacob brought her, in its own superb bird-cage, the learned little bullfinch; telling her, it had been delivered to him without any message, by a man who said she had left it, by mistake, at Tunbridge, whence he had had orders to follow her with it to Cleves park.

She was much provoked thus to receive it. Mrs. Arlbery had pressed her to take it in her uncle's chaise, which she had firmly refused; and she now concluded this method was adopted, that Sir Sedley might imagine she detained it as his gift.

In drawing out, soon after, the receptacle for the bird's nourishment, she perceived, written with a pencil upon the wood, these words: "Thou art gone then, fair fugitive! Ah! at least, fly only where thou mayst be pursued!"

This writing had not been visible till the machine was taken out to be replenished. She recollected the hand of Sir Sedley, and was now sure it was sent by himself, and could no longer, therefore, doubt his intentions being serious.

With infinite perplexity she consulted with her sisters; but, when candidly she had related, that once, to her never-ending regret, she had apparently welcomed his civilities, Eugenia pronounced her rectitude to be engaged by that error, as strongly as her gratitude by the

the preservation of her life, and the extraordinary service done to Lionel, not to reject the young baronet, should he make his proposals.

She heard this opinion with horror. Timid shame, and the counsel of her father, united to impede her naming the internal obstacles which she felt to be insurmountable; and, while casting up, in silence, her appealing eyes to Heaven, for relief, from the intricacy in which she found herself involved, she saw Lionel galloping into the park.

She flew to meet him, and he dismounted, and led his horse, to walk with her.

She flattered herself, she might now represent the mischief he was doing, and obtain from him some redress. But he was more wild and impracticable than ever. "Well, my dear girl," he cried, "when are all these betterings and worsings to take place? Numps has sent for me to see poor little Greek and Latin hobble to the altar; but 'tis a million to one, if our noble baronet does not wish you there before her. He's a charming fellow, faith. I had a good long confab with him this morning."

"This morning? I hope, then, you were so good, so just, as to tell him when you mean to pay the money you have borrowed?"

"My dear child, I often think you were born but yesterday, only, by some accident, you came into the world, like Minerva, grown up and ready dressed. What makes you think I mean to pay him? Have I given him any bond?"

"A bond? Is that necessary to justice and honour?"

"If I had asked the money, you are right, my dear; I ought, then, certainly, to refund. But, as it now stands, 'tis his own affair. I have nothing to do with it: except, indeed, receiving the dear little golden boys, and making merry with them."

"O fie, Lionel, fie!"

"Why, what had I to do with it? Do you think he would care one fig if he saw me sunk to the bottom of the Red Sea? No, my dear, no; you are the little debtor;

tor ; so balance your accounts for yourself, and don't cast them upon your poor neighbours, who have full enough to settle of their own."

Camilla was thunderstruck ; " And have you been so cruel," she cried, " seeing the matter in such a light, to place me in such a predicament ?"

" Cruel, my dear girl ? why, what will it cost you, except a dimple or two the more ? And don't you know you always look best when you smile ? I assure you, it's a mercy he don't see you when you are giving me one of my lectures. It disfigures you so horribly, that he'd take fright and never speak to you again."

" What can I ever say, to make you hear me, or feel for me ? Tell me, at least, what has passed this morning ; and assure me that nothing new, nothing yet worse, has occurred."

" O no, nothing at all. All is in the fairest train possible. I dare say, he'll come hither, upon the grand question, before sun-set."

Camilla gasped for breath, and was some time before she could ask whence he drew such a conclusion.

" O, because I see he's in for it. I have a pretty good eye, my dear ! He said, too, he had such a prodigious---friendship, I think he called it, for you, that he was immeasurably happy, and all that, to be of the least service to your brother. A fine fellow, upon my word ! a fine generous spark as ever I saw. He charged me to call upon him freely when I had any little embarrassment, or difficulty, or was hard run, or things of that sort. He's a fine buck, I tell you, and knows the world perfectly, that I promise you. He's none of your drivellers, none of your ignoramuses. He has the true notion of things. He's just a right friend for me. You could not have made a better match."

Camilla, in the most solemn manner, protested herself disengaged in thought, word, and deed ; and declared her fixed intention so to continue. But he only laughed at her declarations, calling them maidenly fibs ; and, assuring her, the young baronet was so much in earnest, she might as well be sincere as not, " Besides," he added, " 'tis not fair to trifle where a man

behaves so handsomely and honourably. Consider the £.200!"

"I shall quite lose my senses, Lionel!" cried she, in an agony; "I shall quite lose my senses if you speak in this manner!"

Lionel shouted aloud; "Why, my dear girl, what is £.200 to Sir Sedley Clarendel? You talk as if he had twenty pounds a-year for pin-money, like you and Lavinia, that might go with half a gown a-year, if good old Numps did not help you. Why, he's as rich as Cræsus, child. Besides, he would have been quite affronted if I had talked of paying him such a trifle, for he offered me any thing I pleased. O, he knows the world, I promise you! He's none of your starched prigs. He knows life, my dear! He said, he could perfectly conceive how hard it must be to a lad of spirit, like me, to be always exact. I don't know that I ever made a more agreeable acquaintance in my life."

Camilla was in an agitation that made him regard her, for a moment, with a serious surprise; but his natural levity soon resumed its post, and, laughing at himself for being nearly, he said, taken in, by her childish freaks, he protested he would bite no more: "For, after all, you must not think to make a fool of me, my dear. It won't do. I'm too knowing. Do you suppose, if he had not already made up his mind to the noose, and was not sure you had made up yours to letting it be tied, he would have cared for poor me, and my scrapes? No, no; whatever he does for me, before you are married, you may set down in your own memorandum book: whatever he may please to do afterwards, I am content should be charged to poor Pill-garlic."

He then bid her good-morrow, by the name of Lady Clarendel; and said, he would go and see if little Greek and Latia were as preposterous a prude about young Lynmere.

Camilla remained almost petrified with amazement at her own situation; and only was deterred from immediately opening her whole heart and affairs to her father, with the confidence to which his indulgence entitled him

him, by the impossibility of explaining her full distress without betraying her brother.

C H A P. XXVIII.

A Council.

THE next morning, Camilla, eager to try once more her influence with her brother, accompanied him into the park, and renewed her remonstrances, but with no better success; and while they were passing by a private gate, that opened to the high road, they saw Sir Sedley Clarendel driving by in his phaeton.

Lionel, bursting from his sister, opened the gate, called to Sir Sedley to give his reins to one of his servants, and brought him, not unwilling, though much surprised, into the park.

Camilla, in dismay unspeakable at this conduct, and the idea of such a meeting, had run forward instantly to hide herself in the summer house, to avoid re-passing the gate in her way to the mansion; but her scheme was more precipitate than wise; Lionel caught a glimpse of her gown as she went into the little building, and shouted aloud: "Look! look! Sir Sedley! there's Camilla making believe to run away from you!"

"Ah, fair fugitive!" cried the Baronet springing forward and entering the summer-house almost as soon as herself, "fly only thus, where you may be pursued!"

Camilla utterly confounded, knew not where to cast her eyes, where to hide her face; and her quick-changing colour, and short-heaved breath, manifested an excess of confusion, that touched, flattered, and penetrated the baronet so deeply and so suddenly, as to put him off from all guard of consequences, and all recollection

lection of matrimonial distaste: "Beautiful, resistless Camilla!" he cried; "how vain is it to struggle against your witchery! Assure me but of your clemency, and I will adore the chains that shackle me!"

Camilla, wholly overcome, by sorrow, gratitude, repentance, and shame, sunk upon a chair, and shed a torrent of tears that she even sought not to restrain. The shock of refusing one to whose error in believing himself acceptable she had largely contributed, or the horror of yielding to him her hand, while her heart was in the possession of another, made her almost wish, at this moment, he should divine her distress, that his own pride might conclude it.

But far different from what would produce such an effect, were the feelings of pride now working in his bosom. He imagined her emotion had its source in causes the softest and most flattering. Every personal obstacle sunk before this idea, and with a seriousness in his manner he had not yet used: "This evening, lovely Camilla," he cried, "let me beg for this evening, the audience accorded me upon that which I lost at Tunbridge."

He was then going; but Camilla, hastily rising, cried, "Sir Sedley, I beseech—" when Lionel capering into the little apartment, danced round it in mad ecstasy, chanting, "Lady Clarendel, Lady Clarendel, my dear Lady Clarendel!"

Camilla now was not confused alone. Sir Sedley himself could gladly have pushed him out of the building; but neither the looks of surprise and provocation of the Baronet, nor the prayers nor reprimands of Camilla, could tame his wild transport. He shook hands, whether he would or not, with the one; he bowed most obsequiously, whether she would regard him or not, to the other; and still chanting the same burden, made a clamour that shook the little edifice to its foundation.

The strong taste for ridicule, that was a prominent part of the character of Sir Sedley, was soon conquered by this ludicrous behaviour, and both his amazement and displeasure ended in a hearty fit of laughter. But Camilla suffered too severely to join in the mirth; she
blushed

blushed for her brother, she blushed for herself, she hung her head in speechless shame, and covered her eyes with her hand.

The noisy merriment of Lionel preventing any explanation, though rendering it every moment more necessary, Sir Sedley, repeating his request for the evening, took leave.

Camilla looked upon his departing in this manner as her sentence to misery, and was pursuing him, to decline the visit; but Lionel, seizing her two hands, swung her round the room, in defiance of her even angry expostulations and sufferings, which he neither credited nor conceived, and then skipt after the baronet himself, who was already out of the park.

She became now nearly frantic. She thought herself irretrievably in the power of Sir Sedley, and by means so forced and indelicate, that she was scarcely more afflicted at the event, than shocked by its circumstances; and though incapable to really harbour rancour against a brother she sincerely loved, she yet believed at this moment she never should forgive, nor willingly see him more.

In this state she was found by Lavinia. The history was inarticulately told, but Lavinia could give only her pity; she saw not any avenue to an honourable retreat, and thought, like Eugenia, she could now only free herself by the breach of what should be dearer to her even than happiness, her probity and honour.

Utterly inconsolable she remained, till again she heard the voice of Lionel, loudly singing in the park.

"Go to him! go to him! my dearest Lavinia," she cried, "and, if my peace is dear to you, prevail with him to clear up the mistakes of Sir Sedley, and to prevent his dreaded, killing visit this evening!"

Lavinia only answered by compliance; but, after an half hour's useless contest with her riotous brother, returned to her weeping sister, not merely successful with regard to her petition, but loaded with fresh ill tidings that she knew not how to impart. Lionel had only laughed at the repugnance of Camilla, which he regarded as something between childishness and affectation,

fection, and begged Lavinia to be wiser than to heed to it: "Brother Sedley has desired me, however," he added, "not to speak of the matter to Numps nor my father, till he has had a little more conversation with his charmer; and he intends to call to-night as if only upon a visit to me."

When Camilla learnt, at length, this painful end of her embassy, she gave herself up so completely to despair, that Lavinia affrighted, ran to the house for Eugenia, whose extreme youth was no impediment in the minds of her liberal sisters, to their belief nor reverence of her superior wisdom. Her species of education had early prepossessed them with respect for her knowledge, and her unaffected fondness for study, had fixed their opinion of her extraordinary understanding. The goodness of her heart, the evenness of her temper, and her natural turn to contemplation, had established her character alike for sanctity and for philosophy throughout the family.

She listened with the sincerest commiseration to the present state of the case: "Certainly," she cried, "you cannot in honour, now refuse him; but deal with him sincerely, and he may generously himself relinquish his claims. Write to him, my dear Camilla; tell him you grieve to afflict, yet disdain to deceive him; assure him of your perfect esteem and eternal gratitude; but confess, at once, your heart refuses to return his tenderness. Entreat him to forgive whatever he may have mistaken, and nobly to restore to you the liberty of which your obligations, without his consent must rob you."

To Lavinia this advice appeared infallible; but Camilla, though she felt an entanglement which fettered herself, thought it by no means sufficiently direct or clear to authorise a rejection of Sir Sedley; since, strangely as she seemed in his power, circumstances had placed her there, and not his own solicitation.

Yet to prevent a visit of which her knowledge seemed consent, and which her consent must be most seriously to authorise, she deemed as indispensable to her character, as to her fears. She hesitated therefore not a mo-

ment

ment in preferring writing to a meeting; and after various conversations, and various essays, the following billet was dispatched to Clarendel Place, through the means of Molly Mill, and by her friend Tommy Hodd.

To Sir Sedley Clarendel.

I SHOULD ill return what I owe to Sir Sedley Clarendel by causing him any useless trouble I can spare him. He spoke of a visit hither this evening, when I was too much hurried to represent that it could not be received, as my brother's residence is at Ethrington, and my father and my uncle have not the honour to be known to Sir Sedley. For me, my gratitude must ever be unalterable; and where accident occasions a meeting, I shall be most happy to express it; but I have nothing to say, nothing to offer, that could recompense one moment of Sir Sedley's time given voluntarily to such a visit.

CAMILLA TYROLD.

Ill as this letter satisfied her, she could devise nothing better; but though her sisters had both thought it too rigorous, she would not risk any thing gentler.

During the dinner, they all appeared absent and dejected; but Sir Hugh attributed it to the non-arrival of Clermont in watching for whom his own time was completely occupied, by examining two weather-cocks, and walking from one to the other, to see if they agreed, or how they changed; Indiana was wholly engrossed in consultations with Miss Margland, upon the most becoming dress for a bride's maid; and Mr. Tyrold having observed that his three girls had spent the morning together, concluded Camilla had divulged to them her unhappy perplexity, and felt soothed himself in considering she had soothers so affectionate and faithful.

Early in the evening Tommy Hodd arrived, and Molly Mill brought Camilla the following answer of Sir Sedley.

Miss

Miss Camilla Tyrold.

AH! what in this lower sphere can be unchequered, when even a correspondence with the most lovely of her sex, brings alarm with its felicity? Must I come, then, to Cleves, fair Insensible, but as a visitor to Mr. Lionel? Have you taken a captive only to see him in fetters? Allured a victim merely to behold him bleed? Ah! to-morrow, at least, permit the audience that to-day is denied, and at your feet, let your slave receive his doom.

SEDLEY CLARENDEL.

Camilla turned cold. She shrunk from a remonstrance she conceived she had merited, and regarded herself to be henceforth either culpable or unhappy. Unacquainted with the feminine indulgence which the world by long prescription, grants to coquetry, its name was scarcely known to her; and she saw in its own native egotism the ungenerous desire to please, where she herself was indifferent, and anticipated from Sir Sedley reproach, if not contempt. No sophistications of custom had warped the first innocence of her innate sense of right, and to trifle with the feelings of another for any gratification of her own, made success bring a blush to her integrity, not exultation to her vanity.

The words *victim* and *bleeding*, much affected the tender Lavinia, while those of *fetters*, *captive*, and *insensible*, satisfied the heroic Eugenia that Sir Sedley deserved the hand of her sister; but neither of them spoke.

"You say nothing?" cried Camilla turning paler and paler, and sitting down lest she should fall.

They both wept and embraced her, and Eugenia said, if, indeed, she could not conquer her aversion, she saw no way to elude the baronet, but by openly confessing her repugnance, in the conversation he demanded.

Camilla saw not less strongly the necessity of being both prompt and explicit; but how receive Sir Sedley at

at Cleves? and upon what pretence converse with him privately? Even Lionel the next day was to return to the university, though his presence if he staid, would, in all probability but add to every difficulty.

At length, they decided, that the conference should take place at the Grove; and to prevent the threatened visit of the next day, Camilla wrote the following answer:

To Sir Sedley Clarendel.

I SHOULD be grieved, indeed, to return my obligations to Sir Sedley Clarendel by meriting his serious reproach; yet I cannot have the honour of seeing him at Cleves, since my brother is immediately quitting it for Oxford. As soon as I hear Mrs. Arlbery is again at the Grove, I shall wait upon her, and always be most happy to assure Sir Sedley of my gratitude, which will be as lasting as it is sincere.

CAMILLA TYROLD.

Though wretched in this strange state of things, she knew not how to word her letter more positively, since his own, notwithstanding its inferences, had so much more the style of florid gallantry than plain truth. Molly Mill undertook that Tommy Hodd should carry it early the next morning.

* * * *

Lionel was so enraged at the non-appearance of the young baronet at night, that Camilla was compelled to confess she had promised to see him, and to give him his answer at Mrs. Arlbery's. He was out of humour, nevertheless, lest Sir Sedley should be affronted by the delay, and feared that the best match in the whole county would prove abortive, from his sister's foolish trimmings, and silly ignorance of life.

C H A P. XXIX.

A Proposal of Marriage.

THE increasing depression of Camilla, and the melancholy of her sympathising sisters, though still attributed to the adverse wind by the compass-watching baronet; escaped not the notice of Mr. Tyrold; who, alarmed for the peace of his daughter, determined to watch for the first quiet opportunity of investigating her actual situation.

Lionel, after breakfast, the next morning, was obliged to relinquish waiting for Clermont, and to set off for Oxford. He contrived to whisper to Camilla, that he hoped she would be a good girl at last, and not play the fool; but, finding she only sighed, he laughed at her calamitous state, in becoming mistress of fifteen thousand per annum, only by the small trouble of running over a short ceremony; and, assuring her he would assist her off with part of the charge, if it were too heavy for her, bid her inform him in time of the propitious day.

Camilla, shortly after, saw from her window, galloping full speed across the park to the house, Major Cerwood. She suspected her tormenting brother to have been again at work; nor was she mistaken. He had met with the Major at the hotel at Tunbridge, while his spirits, always violent, were in a state of almost intoxication of delight, at the first idea of such an accession to his powers of amusement, as a new brother rolling in immense wealth, which he already considered as nearly at his own disposal. High wrought, therefore, for what he deemed good sport, he confirmed what he had asserted at the ball at Northwick, of the expectations of Camilla from Sir Hugh, by relating the public fact, of her having been announced, to the

the family and neighbourhood, for his uncle's heirs, at ten years of age ; and only sinking, in his account, the revocation made so soon after in favour of Eugenia. To this, he added his advice, that no time was to be lost, as numberless new suitors were likely to pursue her from Tunbridge.

The Major, upon alighting, inquired for Sir Hugh, deeming Mr. Tyrold of little consequence, since it was not from him Camilla was to inherit her fortune.

The baronet, as usual, was watching the winds and the clouds ; but, concluding whoever came would bring some news from Clermont, received the Major with the utmost cordiality, saying : " I see, sir, you are a stranger ; by which I suppose you to be just come from abroad ; where, I hope you left all well ? "

" I am just come, sir," answered the Major, " from Tunbridge, where I had the honour, through my acquaintance with Mrs. Arlbery, of meeting daily with your charming niece ; an honour, sir, which must cause all the future happiness or misery of my life. "

He then made a declaration, in form, of the most ardent passion for Camilla ; mentioned his family, which was an honourable one ; talked of his expectations with confidence, though vaguely ; and desired to leave the disposition of the settlement wholly to the Baronet ; who he hoped, would not refuse to see his elder brother, a gentleman of fortune in Lincolnshire, who would have the honour to wait upon him at any time he would be so good as to appoint, upon this momentous affair.

Sir Hugh heard this harangue with consternation. The Major was in the prime of life, his person was good, his speech was florid, his air was assured, and his regimentals were gay. Not a doubt of his success occurred to the Baronet ; who saw, in one blow, the darling scheme of his old age demolished in the deprivation of Camilla.

The Major impatiently waited for an answer ; but Sir Hugh was too much disordered to frame one ; he walked up and down the room, muttering, in a desponding

sponding manner, to himself, "Lord, help us! what a set of poor weak mortals we are, we poor men! The best schemes and plans in the world always coming to nothing before we can bring them about! I'll never form another while I live, for the sake of this one warning. Nobody knows, next, but what Clermont will be carrying off Eugenia to see foreign parts! and then comes some other of these red-coats to take away Indiana; and, after doing all for the best so long, I may be left all alone, except just for Mrs. Margland and the Doctor! that I don't take much pleasure in, Lord help me! except as a Christian, which I hope is no sin."

At length endeavouring to compose himself, he sat down, and said, "So you are come, sir, to take away from me my own particular little niece? which is a hard thing upon an uncle, intending her to live with him. However, I don't mean to find fault; but I can tell you this one thing, sir, which I beg you to remember; which is, if you don't make her happy, you'll break my heart! For she's what I love the best in the world, little as I've made it appear, by not leaving her a shilling. For which sake, however, I can't but respect you the more for coming after her, instead of Eugenia."

"Sir?" cried the Major, amazed.

"The other two chaps," continued he, "that came about us not long ago, wanted to make their court to Eugenia and Indiana; as well as another that came to the house when I was ill, in the same coat as yourself, by what I can gather from the description; but never a one has come to Camilla yet, except yourself, because my brother can spare her but a trifle, having another young girl to provide for, besides Lionel; which is the most expensive of them all, poor boy! never having enough, by the reason Oxford is so dear, as suppose."

The Major now wore an air of surprise and uneasiness that Sir Hugh began to observe, but attributed to his unpleasant reception of his proposals. He begged his pardon, therefore, and again assured him of his respect for
a choice

a choice so little mercenary, which he looked upon as a mark of a good heart.

The Major, completely staggered, and suspecting the information of Lionel to be ill grounded, if not purposely deluding, entreated his permission to wait upon him again; and offered for the present to take leave.

Sir Hugh, in a melancholy voice, said, he would first summon his niece! as he could not answer it to his conscience preventing the meeting, unless she gave him leave.

He then rang the bell, and told Jacob to call Camilla.

Major Cerwood was excessively distressed. To retreat seemed impossible; yet to connect himself without fortune, when he thought he was addressing a rich heiress, was a turn of fate he scarcely knew how either to support or to parry. All that, in this haste, he could resolve, was, to let the matter pass for the moment, and then insist upon satisfaction from Lionel, either in clearing up the mistake, or taking upon himself its blame.

When Camilla appeared, the disturbance of Sir Hugh still augmented; and he could hardly articulate, "My dear, in the case you are willing to leave your family, here's a gentleman come to make his addresses to you; which I think it right you should know, though how I shall struggle through it, if I lose you, is more than my poor weak head can tell; for what shall I do without my dear little girl, that I thought to make the best comfort of my old age? which, however, I beg you not to think of in case this young captain's more agreeable."

"Ah! my dear uncle!" cried she, "your Camilla can never return half the comfort she receives from you! keep me with you still, and ever! I am much obliged to Major Cerwood. I beg him to accept my sincerest thanks; but to pardon me when I assure him, they are all I have to offer him."

Repulse was not new to the Major; who, in various country towns had sought to retrieve his affairs by
some

some prudent connection; his pride, however, had never so little suffered as on the present occasion, for his apprehension of error or imposition had removed from him all thought of even the possibility of a refusal; which, now, therefore, unexpectedly and joyfully obviated his embarrassment, and enabled him to quit the field by an honourable retreat. He bowed profoundly, called himself, without knowing what he said, the most unhappy of men; and, without risking one solicitation, or a moment for repentance, hastily took leave, with intention, immediately, to demand an explanation of Lionel.

But he had not escaped a mile from the house, ere he gave up that design, from anticipating the ridicule that might follow it. To require satisfaction for a young lady's want of fortune, however reasonable, would always be derided as ludicrous. He resolved therefore, quietly to put up with the rejection; and to gather his next documents concerning the portion of a fair damsel, from authority better to be relied upon than that of a brother.

Sir Hugh for some time, discovered not that he had retired. Enchanted by so unexpected a dimission, his favourite scheme of life seemed accorded to him, and he pressed Camilla to his bosom, in a transport of joy. "We shall live together, now, I hope," he cried, "without any of these young chaps coming in again to part us. Not that I would object to your marrying, my dear girl, if it was with a relation, like Eugenia, or, with a neighbour, like Indiana, if it had not been for its going off; but to see you taken away from me by a mere stranger, coming from distant parts, and knowing nothing of any of us, is a thing that makes my heart ache but to think of; so I hope it will happen no more; for these trials do no good to my recovery."

Turning round, then, with a view to say something consolatory to the Major, he was seriously concerned to find him departed. "I can't say," he cried, "I had any intention to send him off so short, his meaning not being bad, considering him in the light of a person in love; which

which is a time when a man has not much thought, except for himself, by what I can gather."

He then proposed a walk, to watch if Clermont were coming. The wind, he acknowledged, was indeed contrary ; but, he did not doubt, upon such a particular occasion, his good lad would not mind such difficulties.

C H A P. XXX.

A Bull-Dog.

SIR HUGH called upon his other nieces to join him ; purposing to stroll to the end of a lane which led to the London road.

Camilla accompanied the party in the most mournful silence. The assuming letter she had received ; the interview she should have to sustain ; and her apparent dependance upon Sir Sedley, sinking her into complete despondence.

When they came to the high road, Sir Hugh made a stop, and bid every body look sharp.

A horseman was seen advancing full gallop. By his figure he appeared to be young ; by his pace, in uncommon speed.

"That's him," cried Sir Hugh, striking his stick upon the ground, and smiling most complacently ; "I said he would not mind the wind, my dear Eugenia ! what's the wind, or the waves either, to a lover ? which is a thing, however, that I won't talk about ; so don't be ashamed, my dear girl, nobody knowing what we mean."

Eugenia

Eugenia looked down; deeply colouring, and much regretting the lameness that prevented her running back, to avoid so public and discountenancing a meeting.

The horseman now came up to them, and was preparing to turn down the lane; when all at once, they perceived him to be Edgar Mandlebert.

He had left Tunbridge in a manner not more abrupt than comfortless. His disappointment in the failure of Camilla at the rooms had been as bitter, as his expectations from the promised conference had been animated. When Lionel appeared, he inquired if his sister were absent from illness.—No; she was only writing a letter. To take this moment for such a purpose, be the letter what it might, seemed sporting with his curiosity and warm interest in her affairs; and he went back, mortified and dejected, to his lodgings; where, just arrived by the stage, he found a letter from Dr. Marchmont, acquainting him with his return to his rectory. In this suspensive state of mind, to cast himself upon his sagacious friend seemed a relief the most desirable: but, while considering whether first to claim from Camilla her promised communication, the voice of Lionel issuing from the room of Major Cerwood, struck his ears. He darted forth, and accompanied the youth to his horse, who was setting out upon some expedition, in the dark; and then received information, under the pretence of great secrecy, that Major Cerwood was going immediately to ask leave of absence, and proceed straight to Hampshire, with his final proposals of marriage with Camilla. He now concluded this was the subject upon which she had meant to consult with him; but delicacy, pride, and hope all combated his interference. He determined even to avoid her, till the answer should be given. “I must owe her hand,” cried he, “to her heart, not to a contest such as this: and, if impartially and unbiassed, the Major is refused, no farther cruel doubt, no torturing hesitation, shall keep me another minute from her feet!” With the dawn, therefore, he sat out for Hampshire; but, fixed to avoid Cleves, till he could learn that the Major’s

Major's visit were over, he devoted his mornings to rides, and his evenings to Dr. Marchmont, till now, a mile or two from the Park, he had met the Major himself, and concluded the acceptance or the rejection decided. They merely touched their hats as they passed each other; and he instantly took the route which the Major was quitting.

In the excess of his tribulation, he was galloping past the whole group, without discerning one of its figures; when Sir Hugh called out, "Why it's young Mr. Edgar! So now we've walked all this way for nothing! and Clermont may be still at Jericho, or at Rome, for any thing we know to the contrary!"

Edgar stopt short. He felt himself shiver at sight of Camilla, but dismounted, gave his horse to his groom, and joined the party.

Eugenia recovering, now fearlessly looked up; but Camilla, struck and affected, shook in every limb, and was forced to hold by Lavinia.

Edgar called upon his utmost presence of mind to carry him through what he conceived to be a final trial. He spoke to Sir Hugh, and compelled himself to speak separately to every one else; but, when he addressed Camilla, to whom he said something not very distinctly, about Tanbridge, she curtsied to him slightly, and turned away, without making any answer. Her mind, taking suddenly a quick retrospection of all that had passed between them, presented him to her view as uncertain and delusive; and, casting upon him, internally, the whole odium of her present distress, and her feelings were so indignant, that, in her present desperate state, she deemed it beneath her to disguise them, either from himself or the world.

Edgar, to whose troubled imagination every thing painted his rival, concluded the Major had been heard with favour; and his own adverse counsel was now recollected with resentment.

Sir Hugh, far more fatigued by his disappointment than by his walk, said he should go no further, as he found it in vain to expect Clermont; and accepted the aid of Edgar to aid his stick in helping him home.

Camilla, still leaning upon Lavinia, mounted a little bank, which she knew Sir Hugh could not ascend, that she might walk on where Edgar could not join her; involuntarily ejaculating, "Lavinia! if you would avoid deceit and treachery, look at a man as at a picture, which tells you only the present moment! Rely upon nothing of time to come! They are not like us, Lavinia. They think themselves free, if they have made no verbal profession; though they may have pledged themselves by looks, by actions, by attentions, and by manners, a thousand, and a thousand times!"

Edgar observed her avoidance with the keenest apprehension; and, connecting it with her failure at the rooms, imagined the Major had now influenced her to an utter aversion of him.

Sir Hugh meanwhile, though wholly unheard, related, in a low voice, to Edgar, the history of his preparations for Clermont; begging him, however, to take no notice of them to Eugenia: and, then, adding, "Very likely, Mr. Edgar, you are just come from Tunbridge! and, if so, you may have met with that young Captain that has been with us this morning; who, I understand to be a Major?"

Edgar was thrown into the utmost trepidation; the artless openness of Sir Hugh gave him every reason to suppose he should immediately gather full intelligence, and all his peace and all his hopes might hang upon another word. He could only bow to the question; but before Sir Hugh could go on, a butcher's boy, who was riding by, from a wanton love of mischief, gave a signal to his attending bull-dog, to attack the old spaniel that accompanied Sir Hugh.

Sustained by his master many a year, the proud old favourite, though unequal to the combat, disdained to fly; and the fierce bull-dog would presently have demolished him, had not Edgar, recovering all his vigour from his earnest desire to rescue an animal so dear to Sir Hugh, armed himself with the baronet's stick, and thrust it dexterously across the jaws of his intended antagonist.

Nothing.

Nothing, however, could withstand the fangs of the bull-dog; they soon severed it, and, again, he made at the spaniel; but Edgar rushed between them, with no other weapons than the broken fragments of the stick: and, while the baronet and Eugenia screamed out to old Rover to return to them, and Lavinia, with more readiness of common sense, exerted the fullest powers of which her gentle voice was capable, to conjure the wicked boy to call off his dog, Camilla, who was the last to look round at this scene, only turned about as the incensed and disappointed bull-dog, missing his object, aimed at Edgar himself. Roused at once from her fullen calm to the most agonising sensibility, every thing and every body, herself most of all, were forgotten in the sight of his danger; and, with a piercing shriek, she darted down the bank, and arrived at the tremendous spot, at the same instant that the more useful exhortations of Lavinia, had induced the boy to withdraw the fierce animal; who, with all his might, and all his fury, obeyed the weak whistle of a little urchin he had been bred to love and respect, for bringing him his daily food.

Camilla perceived not if the danger were impending, or over; gasping, pale, and agitated, she caught Mandlebert by the arm, and, in broken accents, half pronounced, "O Edgar!----are you hurt?"

The revulsion that had operated in her mind took now its ample turn in that of Mandlebert; he could hardly trust his senses, hardly believe he existed; yet he felt the pressure of her hand upon his arm, and saw in her countenance terror the most undisguised, and tenderness that went straight to his soul. "Is it Camilla," he cried, "who thus speaks to me?----Is not my safety or my destruction alike indifferent to Camilla?"

"O no! O no!" cried she, scarce conscious she answered at all, till called to recollection by his own changed looks; changed from incredulity and amazement to animation that lightened up every feature, to eyes that shot fire. Abashed, astonished, ashamed, she precipitately drew away her hand, and sought quietly to retire.

But Edgar was no longer master of himself; he conceived he was on a pinnacle, whence he could only, and without any gradation, turn to happiness or despair. He followed her, trembling and uncertain, his joy fading into alarm at her retreat, his hope transforming into apprehension at her resumed coldness of demeanor.

"Do you repent," he cried, "that you have shewn ~~me~~ ^{little} humanity?—will the Major—the happy Major ~~be~~—be offended you do less than detest me?"

"The Major!" repeated she, looking back, surprised, "can you think the Major has any influence with me?"

"Ah, Heaven!" he cried, "what do you say!"—

Enchanted, affrighted, bewildered, yet silent, she hurried on; Edgar could not forget himself more than a moment; he forbore, therefore, to follow, and, though with a self-denial next to torture, returned to Sir Hugh, to whom his arm was doubly necessary, from the scene he had just witnessed, and the loss of his stick.

The butcher's boy and his bull-dog were decamped; and the baronet and Eugenia were rivalling each other in fondling the rescued spaniel, and in pouring thanks and praises unlimited upon Edgar.

They then walked back as before; and, as soon as they re-entered the mansion, the female party went up stairs, and Sir Hugh, warmly shaking Edgar by the hand, said: "My dear Mr. Edgar, this is one of the happiest days of my life, except just that of my nephew's coming over, which it is but right to put before it. But here, first, my dear Camilla's refused that young Captain, who would have carried her the Lord knows where, immediately, as I make no doubt: and next, I've saved the life of my poor old Rover, by the means of your good-nature."

"Refused?" cried Edgar; "my dear Sir Hugh!—did you say refused?"

Sir Hugh innocently gratified him with the repetition of the word, but begged him not to mention it, "For fear," he said, "it should hurt the young man when he falls in love somewhere else; which I heartily hope

he will do soon, poor gentleman! for the sake of its not fretting him."

"Miss Camilla, then, has refused him?" again repeated Edgar, with a countenance that, to any man but the baronet, must have betrayed his whole soul.

"Yes, poor gentleman! this very morning; for which I am thankful enough: for what do we know of those young officers, who may all be sent to the East Indies, or Jamaica, every day of their lives? Not but what I have the proper pity for him, which, I hope, is all that can be expected."

Edgar walked about the room, in a perturbation of hope, fear, and joy, that disabled him from all further appearance of attention. He wished to relate this transaction to Dr. Marchmont, yet dreaded any retarding advice; he languished to make Camilla herself the sole mistress of his destiny: the interest she had shewn for his safety seemed to admit but one interpretation; and, finally, he resolved to stay at Cleves till he could meet with her alone.

Camilla had not uttered a word after the adventure of the bull-dog. The smallest idea that she could excite the least emotion in Edgar, brought a secret rapture to her heart, that, at any former period, would alone have sufficed to render her happy: but, at this instant of entanglement with another, she revolted from the indulgence of such pleasure; and instead of dwelling, as she would have done before, on the look, the accent, the manner, that were susceptible, by any construction, of partiality, she checked every idea that did not represent Edgar as unstable and inconsistent; and fought, with all her power, to regard him as Mrs. Arlbery had painted him, and to believe him, except in a few casual moments of caprice, insensible and hard of heart.

Yet this entanglement, in which, scarce knowing how, she now seemed to be entwined with Sir Sedley, grew more and more terrific; and when she considered that her sisters themselves thought her independence gone, and her honour engaged, she was seized with so much wonderment, how it had all been brought about,
that

that her understanding seemed to play her false, and she believed the whole a dream.

C H A P. XXXI.

An Oak Tree.

WHEN the sisters were summoned down stairs to dinner, planted at the door, ready to receive them at their entrance, stood Edgar. Lavinia and Eugenia addressed him as usual; but Camilla could not speak, could not return his salutation, could not look at him. She sat hastily down in her accustomed place by her uncle, and even the presence of her father scarcely restrained her tears, as she contrasted the hopeless uncertainties of Edgar, with the perilous pursuit of Sir Sedley.

Edgar, for the first time, saw her avoidance without suspecting that it flowed from repugnance. The interest she had shewn for his safety was still bounding in his breast, and as, from time to time, he stole a glance at her, and observed her emotion, his heart whispered him the softest hopes, that soon the most perfect confidence would make every feeling reciprocal.

But these hopes were not long without alloy; he soon discerned something that far exceeded what could give him pleasure in her perturbation; he read in it not merely hurry and alarm, but suffering and distress.

He now ventured to look at her no more; his confidence gave place to pity; he saw she was unhappy, and breathed no present wish but to relieve and console her.

When the dessert was served, she was preparing to retire; but she caught the eye of her father, and saw she

she should not long be alone ; she re-seated herself, therefore, in haste, to postpone, at least, his scrutiny.

Every body, at length, arose, and Sir Hugh proposed that they should all walk in the park, during his nap, but keep close to the pales, that they might listen for all passengers, in case of Clermont's coming.

To this, also, Camilla could make no objection, and they set out. She took an arm of each sister, and indulged the heaviness of her heart in not uttering a word.

They had not gone far when a servant ran after Mr. Tyrold with a packet, just arrived, by a private hand, from Lisbon. He returned to read it in his own room ; Lavinia and Eugenia accompanied him to hear its contents, and Camilla, for the first time, seemed the least affectionate of his daughters ; she durst not encounter him but in the mixt company of all the house ; she told Lavinia to make haste back with the news, and took the arm of Indiana.

The compulsion of uninteresting discourse soon became intolerable ; and no longer chained to the party by the awe of her father, she presently left Indiana to Miss Margland, and perceiving that Edgar was conversing with Dr. Orkborne, said she would wait for her sisters ; and, turning a little aside, sat down upon a bench under a large oak.

Here her painful struggle and unwilling forbearance ended ; she gave free vent to her tears, and thought herself the most wretched of human beings ; she found her heart, her aching heart, more than ever devoted to Mandlebert, filled with his image, revering his virtues, honouring even his coldness, from a persuasion she deserved not his affection, and sighing solely for the privilege to consign herself to his remembrance for life, though unknown to himself, and unsuspected by the world. The very idea of Sir Sedley was horror to her ; she felt guilty to have involved herself in an intercourse so fertile of danger ; she thought over, with severest repentance, her short, but unjustifiable deviation from that transparent openness, and undesigning plainness of conduct, which her disposition as much

as her education ought to have rendered unchangeable. To that, alone, was owing all her actual difficulty, for to that alone was owing her own opinion of any claim upon her justice. How dearly, she cried, do I now pay for the unthinking plan with which I risked the peace of another, for the re-establishment of my own! She languished to throw herself into the arms of her father, to unbosom to him all her errors and distresses, and owe their extrication to his wisdom and kindness. She was sure he would be unmoved by the glare of a brilliant establishment, and that far from desiring her to sacrifice her feelings to wealth and shew, he would himself plead against the alliance when he knew the state of her mind, and recommend to her, so circumstanced, the single life, in the true spirit of christian philosophy and moderation: but all was so closely interwoven in the affairs and ill conduct of her brother, that she believed herself engaged in honour to guard the fatal secret, though hazarding by its concealment impropriety and misery.

These afflicting ruminations were at length interrupted by the sound of feet; she took her handkerchief from her eyes, expecting to see her sisters; she was mistaken, and beheld Mandlebert.

She started and rose: she strove to chase the tears from her eyes without wiping them, and asked what he had done with Dr. Orkborne?

"You are in grief!" cried he in a tone of sympathy; "some evil has befallen you!—let me ask—"

"No; I am only waiting for my sisters. They have just received letters from Lisbon."

"You have been weeping! you are weeping now! why do you turn away from me? I will not obtrusively demand your confidence—yet, could I give you the most distant idea what a weight it might remove from my mind,—you would find it difficult to deny yourself the pleasure of doing so much good!"

The tears of Camilla now streamed afresh. Words so kind from Edgar, the cold, the hard-hearted Edgar, surprised and overset her; yet she endeavoured to hide her face, and made an effort to pass him.

"Is

"Is not this a little unkind?" cried he, gravely; "however, I have no claim to oppose you."

"Unkind" she repeated, and involuntarily turning to him, shewed a countenance so disconsolate, that he lost his self-control, and taking her reluctant hand, said: "O Camilla! torture me no longer!"

Almost transfixed with astonishment, she looked at him for a moment in a speechless wonder; but the interval of doubt was short; the character of Edgar, for unalienable steadiness, unalterable honour, was fixed in her mind, like "truths from holy writ," and she knew, with certainty incontrovertible, that his fate was at her disposal, from the instant he acknowledged openly her power over his feelings.

Every opposite sensation, that with violence the most ungovernable could encounter but to combat, now met in her bosom, elevating her to rapture, harrowing her with terror, menacing even her understanding. The most exquisite wish of her heart seemed accorded at a period so nearly too late for its acceptance, that her faculties, bewildered, confused, deranged, lost the capacity of clearly conceiving if still she were a free agent or not.

He saw her excess of disorder with alarm; he sought to draw her again to her seat; but she put her hand upon her forehead, and leant it against the bark of the tree.

"You will not speak to me!" cried he; you will not trust me! shall I call you cruel? No! for you are not aware of the pain you inflict, the anguish you make me suffer! the generosity of your Nature would else, unbidden, impulsively interfere."

"*You suffer! you!*" cried she, again distressfully, almost incredulously, looking at him, while her hands were uplifted with amazement: "I thought you above any suffering! superior to all calamity!—almost to all feeling!—"

"Ah, Camilla! what thus estranges you from candor? from justice? what is it can prompt you to goad thus a heart which almost from its first beating—"

He stooped, desirous to check himself; while penetrated by his softness, and ashamed of what, in the bitterness of her spirit, she had pronounced, she again melted into tears, and sunk down upon the bench; yet holding out to him one hand, while with the other she covered her face: "Forgive me," she cried, "I entreat—for I scarce know what I say."

Such a speech, and so accompanied, might have demolished the stoicism of an older philosopher than Edgar; he fervently kissed her proffered hand, exclaiming: "Forgive you! can Camilla use such a word? has she the slightest care for my opinion? the most remote concern for me, or for my happiness?"

"Farewell! farewell!" cried she, hastily drawing away her hand, "go now, I beseech you!"

"What a moment to expect me to depart! O Camilla! my soul sickens of this suspense! End it generous Camilla! beloved as lovely! my heart is all your own! use it gently, and accept it nobly!"

Every other emotion, now, in the vanquished Camilla, every retrospective fear, every actual regret, yielded to the conquering charm of grateful tenderness; and restoring the hand she had withdrawn: "O Edgar," she cried, "how little can I merit such a gift! yet I prize it—far, far, beyond all worlds!"

The agitation of Edgar was, at first, too mighty and too delicious for speech; but his eyes, now cast up to heaven, now fixed upon her own, spoke the most ardent, yet purest felicity; while her hand, now held to his heart, now pressed to his lips, strove vainly to recover its liberty. "Blest moment" he at length uttered, "that finishes for ever such misery of uncertainty! that gives my life to happiness—my existence to Camilla!"

Again speech seemed too poor for him. Perfect satisfaction is seldom loquacious; its character is rather tender than gay; and where happiness succeeds abruptly to long solicitude and sorrow, its enjoyment is fearful; it softens rather than exhilarates. Sudden joy is sportive, but sudden happiness is awful.

The

The pause, however, that on his side was ecstatic thankfulness, soon became mixt, on that of Camilla, with confusion and remorse: Sir Sedley returned to her memory, and with him every reflection, and every apprehension, that most cruelly could fully each trembling, though nearly gratified hope.

The cloud that so soon dimmed the transient radiance of her countenance, was instantly perceived by Edgar; but as he was beginning the most anxious inquiries, the two sisters approached, and Camilla, whose hand he then relinquished, rushed forward, and throwing her arms around their necks, wept upon their bosoms.

"Sweet sisters!" cried Edgar, embracing them all three in one; "long may ye thus endearingly entwine each other, in the sacred links of affectionate affinity! Where shall I find our common father?—where is Mr. Tyrold?"

The amazed sisters could with difficulty answer that he was with their uncle, to whom he was communicating news from their mother.

Edgar looked tenderly at Camilla, but, perceiving her emotion, forbore to speak to her, though he could not deny himself the pleasure of snatching one kiss of the hand which hung down upon the shoulder of Eugenia; he then whispered to both the sisters: "You will not, I trust, be my enemies?" and hurried to the house.

"What can this mean?" cried Eugenia and Lavinia in a breath.

"It means, said Camilla, "that I am the most distressed—yet the happiest of human beings!"

This little speech, began with the deepest sigh, but finished with the most refulgent smile, only added to their wonder.

"I hope you have been consulting with Edgar," said the innocent Eugenia; "nobody can more ably advise you, since, in generosity to Lionel, you are prohibited from counselling with my father."

Again the most expressive smiles played in every feature through the tears of Camilla, as she turned, with involun-

involuntary archness, to Eugenia, and answered :
 " And shall I follow his counsel, my dear sister, if he gives me any ? "

" Why not ? he is wise, prudent, and much attached to us all. How he can have supposed it possible we could be his enemies, is past all divination ! "

Gaiety was so truly the native growth of the mind of Camilla, that neither care nor affliction could chase it long from its home. The speeches of the unsuspecting Eugenia, that a moment before would have passed unheeded, now regaled her renovated fancy with a thousand amusing images, which so vigorously struggled against her sadness and her terrors, that they were soon nearly driven from the field by their sportive assailants ; and, by the time she reached her chamber, whither, lost in amaze, her sisters followed her, the surprise she had in store for them, the pleasure with which she knew they would sympathise in her happiness, and the security of Edgar's decided regard, had liberated her mind from the shackles of reminiscence, and restored her vivacity to its original spirit.

Fastening, then, her door, she turned to them with a countenance of the brightest animation ; alternately and almost wildly embraced them, and related the explicit declaration of Edgar ; now hiding in their bosoms the blushes of her modest joy, now offering up to Heaven the thanksgiving of her artless rapture, now dissolving in the soft tears of the tenderest sensibility, according to the quick changing impulses of her natural and lively, yet feeling and susceptible character. Nor once did she look at the reverse of this darling portrait of chosen felicity, till Eugenia, with a gentle sigh, uttered : " Unhappy Sir Sedley Clarendel ! how may this stroke be softened to him ? "

" Ah Eugenia ! " she cried ; " that alone is my impediment to the most perfect, the most unmixt content ! why have you made me think of him ? "

" My dear Camilla, " said Eugenia, with a look of curious earnestness, and taking both her hands, while she seemed examining her face, " you are then, it seems, in love ? and with Edgar Mandelbert ? "

Camilla,

Camilla, blushing, yet laughing, broke away from her, denying the charge.

A consultation succeeded upon the method of proceeding with the young Baronet. Tommy Hodd was not yet returned with the answer; it was five miles to Clarendel Place, which made going and returning his day's work. She resolved to wait but this one reply, and then to acknowledge to Edgar the whole of her situation. The delicacy of Lavinia, and the high honour of Eugenia, concurred in the propriety of this confession; and they all saw the urgent necessity of an immediate explanation with Sir Sedley, whose disappointment might every hour receive added weight from delay. Painful, therefore, confusing and distasteful, as was the task, Camilla determined upon the avowal, and as completely to be guided by Edgar in this difficult conjuncture, as if his advice were already sanctioned by conjugal authority.

C H A P. XXXII.

A Call of the House.

EDGAR returned to the parlour with a countenance so much brightened, a joy so open, a confidence so manly, and an air so strongly announcing some interesting intelligence, that his history required no prelude. "Edgar," said Mr. Tyrold, "you have a look to disarm care of its corrosion. You could not take a better time to wear so cheering an aspect; I have just learnt that my wife can fix no sort of date for her return; I must borrow, therefore, some reflected happiness; and none, after my children, can bring its sunshine so home to my bosom as yourself."

"What

"What a fortunate moment have you chosen," cried Edgar, affectionately taking him by the hand, to express this generous pleasure in seeing me happy! will you repent, will you retract, when you hear in what it may involve you?—Dearest sir! my honoured, my parental friend! to what a test shall I put your kindness!—Will you give me in charge one of the dearest ties of your existence? will you repose in my care so large a portion of your peace? will you trust to me your Camilla?"—

With all the ardour of her character, all the keen and quick feelings of her sensitive mind, scarce had Camilla herself been more struck, more penetrated with sudden joy, sudden wonder, sudden gratification of every kind, than Mr. Tyrold felt at this moment. He more than returned the pressure with which Edgar held his hand, and instantly answered, "Yes, my excellent young friend, without hesitation, without a shadow of apprehension for her happiness! though she is all the fondest father can wish;—and though she only who gave her to me is dearer!"

Felicity and tenderness were now the sole guests in the breast of Edgar. He kissed with reverence the hand of Mr. Tyrold, called him by the honoured and endearing title of father; acknowledged that, from the earliest period of observation, Camilla had seemed to him the most amiable of human creatures; spoke with the warm devotion he sincerely felt for her of Mrs. Tyrold; and was breathing forth his very soul in tender rapture upon his happy prospects, when something between a sigh and a groan from the baronet, made him hastily turn round, apologetic for not sooner addressing him, and respectfully solicit his consent.

Sir Hugh was in an agitation of delight and surprise almost too potent for his strength. "The Lord be good unto me," he cried; "have I lived to see such a day as this!" Then, throwing his arms about Edgar's neck, while his eyes were fast filling with tears, which soon ran plentifully down his cheeks, "Good young Mr. Edgar!" he cried; "good young man! and do you really love my poor Camilla, for all her not being

being worth a penny? And will my dear little darling come to so good an end at last, after being disinherited for doing nothing? And will you never vex her, nor speak an unkind word to her? Indeed, young Mr. Edgar, you are a noble boy! you are indeed; and I love you to the bottom of my old heart for this true good naturedness!"

Then, again and again embracing him, "This is all of a piece," he continued, "with your saving my poor old Rover, which is a thing I shall never forget to my longest day, being a remarkable sign of a good heart; the poor dog having done nothing to offend, as we can all testify. So that it's a surprising thing what that mastiff owed him such a grudge for."

Then quitting him abruptly to embrace Mr. Tyrold, "My dear brother," he cried, "I hope your judgment approves this thing, as well as my sister's, when she comes to hear it, which I shall send off express, before I sleep another wink, for fear of accidents."

"Approved," answered Mr. Tyrold, with a look of the most expressive kindness at Edgar, "is too cold a word; I rejoice, even thankfully rejoice, to place my dear child in such worthy and beloved hands."

"Well, then," cried the enchanted baronet, "if that's the case, that we are all of one mind, we had better settle the business at once, all of us being subject to die by delay."

He then rang the bell, and ordered Jacob to summon Camilla to the parlour, adding, "And all the rest too, Jacob, for I have something to tell them every one, which, I make no doubt, they will be very glad to hear, yourself included, as well as your fellow-servants, who have no right to be left out; only let my niece come first, being her own affair."

Camilla obeyed not the call without many secret sensations of distress and difficulty, but which, mingled with the more obvious ones of modesty and embarrassment, all passed for a flutter of spirits that appeared natural to the occasion.

Mr. Tyrold could only silently embrace her: knowing what she had suffered, and judging thence the excess

of her present satisfaction, he would not add to her confusion by any information of his consciousness; but the softness with which he held her to his bosom spoke, beyond all words, his heartfelt sympathy in her happiness.

Camilla had no power to draw herself from his arms; but Edgar hovered round her, and Sir Hugh repeatedly and impatiently demanded to have his turn. Mr. Tyrold, gently disengaging himself from her embraces, gave one of her hands to Edgar, who, with grateful joy, pressed it to his lips. "My children!" he then said, laying a hand upon the shoulder of each, "what a sight is this to me! how precious a union! what will it be to your excellent mother! So long and so decidedly it has been our favourite earthly wish, that, were she but restored to me---to her country and to her family---I might, perhaps, require some new evil to prevent my forgetting where---and what I am!"

"My dear brother, I say! my dear niece! My dear Mr. young Edgar!" cried Sir Hugh, in the highest good humour, though with nearly exhausted patience, "won't you let me put in a word? nor so much as give you my blessing? though I can hardly hold life and soul together for the sake of my joy!"

Camilla cast herself into his arms, he kissed her most fondly, saying: "Don't forget your poor old uncle, my dear little girl, for the account of this young Mr. Edgar, because, good as he is, he has taken to you but a short time in comparison with me."

"No," said Edgar, still tenaciously retaining the hand parentally bestowed upon him; "no, dear Sir Hugh, I wish not to rob you of your darling. I wish but to be admitted myself into this dear and respected family, and to have Etherington, Cleves, and Beech Park, considered as our alternate and common habitations."

"You are the very best young man in the whole wide world!" cried Sir Hugh, almost sobbing with ecstasy; "for you have hit upon just the very thing I was thinking of in my own private mind! What a mercy it is our not accepting that young Captain, who would have
run

run away with her to I don't know where, instead of being married to the very nearest estate in the county, that will always be living with us !”

The rest of the family now, obedient to the direction of Jacob, who had intimated that something extraordinary was going forward, entered the room.

“ Come in, come in,” cried Sir Hugh, “ and hear the good news ; for we have just been upon the very point of losing the best opportunity that ever we had in our lives of all living together ; which, I hope, we shall now do, without any more strangers coming upon us with their company, being a thing we don't desire.”

“ But what's the good news, uncle ?” said Indiana ; “ is it only about our living together ?”

“ Why, yes, my dear, that's the first principal, and the other is, that young Mr. Edgar's going to marry Camilla ; which I hope you won't take ill, liking being all fancy.”

“ Me ?” cried she, with a disdainful toss of the head, though severely mortified ; “ it's nothing to me, I'm sure !”

Camilla ashamed, and Edgar embarrassed, strove now mutually to shew Sir Hugh they wished no more might be said : but he only embraced them again, and declared he had never been so full of joy before in his whole life, and would not be cut short.

Miss Margland, extremely piqued, vented her spleen in oblique sarcasms, and sought to heal her offended pride by appeals for justice to her sagacity and foresight in the whole business.

Jacob, now, opening the door, said all the servants were come.

Camilla tried to escape ; but Sir Hugh would not permit her, and the house-keeper and butler led the way, followed by every other domestic of the house.

“ Well, my friends,” he cried, with her joy, which I am sure you will do of your own accord, for she's going to be mistress of Beech-Park ; which I thought would have been the case with my other niece, till I found out my mistake ; which is of no consequence
now,

now, all having ended for the best ; though unknown to us poor mortals."

The servants obeyed with alacrity, and offered their hearty congratulations to the blushing Camilla and happy Edgar, Molly Mill excepted ; who, having concluded Sir Sedley Clarendel the man, doubted her own senses, and, instead of open felicitations, whispered Camilla, " Dear Miss, I've got another letter for you ! It's here in my bosom."

Camilla, frightened, said : " Hush ! hush !" while Edgar, imagining the girl, whose simplicity and talkativeness were familiar to him, had said something ridiculous, intreated to be indulged with hearing her remark : but seeing Camilla look grave, forbore to press his request.

The baronet now began an harangue upon the happiness that would accrue from these double unions, for which he assured them they should have double remembrances, though the same preparations would do for both, as he meant they should take place at the same time, provided Mr. Edgar would have the obligingness to wait for a fair wind, which he was expecting every hour.

Camilla could now stay no longer : nor could Edgar, though adoring the hearty joy of Sir Hugh, refuse to aid her in absconding.

He begged her permission to follow, as soon as it might be possible, which she tacitly accorded. She was impatient herself for the important conference she was planning, and felt, with increasing solicitude, that all her life's happiness hung upon her power to extricate herself honourably from the terrible embarrassment in which she was involved.

She sauntered about the hall till the servants came out, anxious to receive the letter which Molly Mill had announced. They all sought to surround her with fresh good wishes ; but she singled out Molly, and begged the rest to leave her for the present. The letter, however, was not unpinned from the inside of Molly's neck handkerchief, before Edgar, eager and gay, joined her.

Trembling

Trembling then, she intreated her to make haste.

"La, Miss," answered the girl, "if you hurry me so, I shall tear it as sure as can be; and what will you say then, Miss?"

"Well---then---another time will do---take it to my room."

"No, no, Miss; the gentleman told Tommy Hodd he wanted an answer as quick as can be; he said, if Tommy'd come a-horseback, he'd pay for the horse, to make him quicker; and Tommy says he always behaves very handsome."

She then gave her the squeezed billet. Camilla, in great confusion, put it into her pocket. Edgar, who even unavoidably heard what passed, held back till Molly retired; and then, with an air of undisguised surprise and curiosity, though in a laughing tone, said, "Must not the letter be read till I make my bow?"

"O yes,"---cried she, stammering, "it may be read---at any time." And she put her hand in her pocket to re-produce it. But the idea of making known the strange and unexpected history she had to relate, by shewing so strange a correspondence, without one leading and softening previous circumstance, required a force and confidence of which she was not mistress. She twisted it, therefore, hastily round, to hide the handwriting of the direction, and, then, with the same care, rolled it up, and encircled it with her fingers.

"Shall I be jealous?" said he, gently, though disappointed.

"You have much reason!" she answered, with a smile so soft, it dispersed every fear, yet with an attention so careful to conceal the address, that it kept alive every wonder. He took her other hand, and, kissing it cried: "No, sweetest Camilla, such unworthy distrust shall make no part of our compact. Yet I own myself a little interested to know what gentleman has obtained a privilege I should myself prize above almost any other. I will leave you, however, to read the letter, and, perhaps, before you answer it---but no---I will ask nothing; I shall lose all pleasure in your confidence."

fidence, if it is not spontaneous. I will go and find your sisters."

The first impulse of Camilla was, to commit to him immediately the unopened letter: but the fear of its contents, its stile, its requisitions, made her terror overpower her generosity; and, though she looked after him with regret, she stood still to break the seal of her letter.

Miss Camilla Tyrold.

Is it thus, O far too fair tormenter! thou delightest to torture? Dost thou give wings but to clip them? raise expectation but to bid it linger? fan bright the flame of hope, but to see it consume in its own ashes? Another delay!—Ah! tell me how I may exist till it terminates! Name to me, O fair tyrant! some period,—or build not upon longer forbearance, but expect me at your feet. You talk of the Grove: its fair owner is just returned, and calls herself impatient to see you. To-morrow, then.—you will not, I trust, kill me again to-morrow? With the sun, the renovating sun, I will visit those precincts, nor quit them till warned away by the pale light of Diana: tell me, then, to what century of that period your ingenious cruelty condemns me to this expiring state, ere a vivifying smile recalls me back to life?

SEDLEY CLARENDEL.

The immediate presence of Edgar himself could not have made this letter die the cheeks of Camilla of a deeper red. She saw that Sir Sedley thought her only coquetishly trifling, and she looked forward with nearly equal horror to clearing up a mistake that might embitter his future life, and to acknowledging to Edgar—the scrupulous, the scrutinising, the delicate Edgar—that such a mistake could have been formed.

She was ruminating upon this formidable, this terrible task, when Edgar again appeared, accompanied by her sisters. She hurried the letter into her pocket. Edgar saw the action with a concern that dampst his spirits

spirits; he wished to obtain from her immediately the unlimited trust, which immediately, and for ever, he meant to repose in her. They all strolled together for a short time in the park; but she was anxious to retreat to her room, and her sisters were dying with impatience to read Sir Sedley's letter. Edgar, disturbed to see how little any of their countenances accorded with the happy feelings he had so recently experienced, proposed not to lengthen the walk, but flattered himself, upon re-entering the house, Camilla would afford him a few minutes of explanation. But she only, with a faint smile, said she should soon return to the parlour; and he saw Molly Mill eagerly waiting for her upon the stairs, and heard her, in reply to some question concerning Tommy Hodd, desire the girl to be quiet till she got to her room.

Edgar could form no idea of what all this meant, yet, that some secret disturbance preyed upon Camilla, that some gentleman wrote to her, and expected impatiently an answer; and that the correspondence passed neither through her friends, nor by the post, but by the medium of Molly Mill, were circumstances not less unaccountable than unpleasant.

Camilla, meanwhile, produced the letter to her sisters, beseeching their ablest counsel. "See but," she cried, "how dreadfully unprepared is Sir Sedley for the event of the day! And oh!—how yet more unprepared must be Edgar for seeing that such a letter could ever be addressed to me! How shall I shew it him, my dear sisters? how help his believing I must have given every possible encouragement, ere Sir Sedley could have written to me in so assured a style.

Much deliberation ensued; but they were all so perplexed, that they were summoned to tea before they had come to any resolution.

The counsel of Eugenia, then, prevailed; and it was settled, that Camilla should avoid, for the present, any communication to Edgar, lest it should lead to mischief between him and the young Barotet, who could not but be mutually displeased with each other; and

that the next morning, before she saw Edgar again, she should set out for the Grove, and there cast herself wholly upon the generosity of Sir Sedley; and, when freed from all engagement, return, and relate, without reserve, the whole history to Edgar; who would so soon be brother of her brother, that he would pardon the faults of Lionel, and who would then be in no danger himself from personal contest or discussion with Sir Sedley. She wrote, therefore, one line, to say she would see Mrs. Arlbery early the next day, and delivered it to Molly Mill; who promised to borrow a horse of the under-groom, that Tommy Hodd might be back before bed-time, without any obligation to Sir Sedley.

She, then, went down stairs; when Edgar disappointed by her long absence, sought vainly to recompense it by conversing with her. She was gentle, but seated herself aloof, and avoided his eyes.

His desire to unravel so much mystery he thought now so legitimated by his peculiar situation, that he was frequently upon the point of soliciting for information: but, to know himself privileged, upon further reflection, was sufficient to insure his forbearance. Even when that knot was tied which would give to him all power, he sincerely meant to owe all her trust to willing communication. Should he now, then, make her deem him exacting, and tenacious of prerogative? no; it might shackle the freedom of her mind in their future intercourse. He would quietly, therefore, wait her own time, and submit to her own inclination. She could not doubt his impatience; he would not compel her generosity.

C H A P. XXXIII.

The Triumph of Pride.

THE three sisters were retired, at night, to another council in the room of Camilla, when Molly Mill, with a look of dismay, burst in upon them, bringing, with the answer of Sir Sedley, news that Tommy Hodd, by an accident he could not help, had rode the horse she had borrowed for him of the under-groom to death.

The dismay, now, spread equally to them all. What a tale would this misfortune unfold to Sir Hugh, to Edgar, to the whole house! the debt of Lionel, the correspondence with Sir Sedley, the expectations of the young Baronet—Camilla could not support it, she sent for Jacob to own to him the affair, and beg his assistance.

Jacob, though getting into bed, obeyed the call. He was, however, so much irritated at the loss of the horse, and the boldness of the under-groom, in lending him without leave, that, at first, he would listen to no intreaties, and protested that both the boy and Molly Mill should be complained of to his master. The eloquence, however, of his three young mistresses, for so all the nieces of Sir Hugh were called by the servants at Cleves, soon softened his ire; he almost adored his master, and was affectionately attached to the young family. They begged him, therefore, to buy another horse as like it as possible, and to contrive not to employ it when Sir Hugh was in sight, till they were able to clear up the history to their uncle themselves: this would not be difficult, as the Baronet rarely visited his stables, since his fall, from the melancholy

lancholy with which he was filled by the sight of his horses.

There was to be a fair of cattle in the neighbourhood the next day, and Jacob promised to ride over to see what bargain he could make for them.

They then inquired about what money would be necessary for the purchase.

The cost, he said, of poor Tom Jones was 40l.

Camilla held up her hands, almost screaming. Eugenia, with more presence of mind, said they would see him again in the morning before he went, and then told Molly Mill to wait for her in her own room.

"What can I now do?" cried Camilla; "I would not add the history of this dreadful expence to the sad tale I have already to relate to Edgar for the universe! To begin my career by such a string of humiliations would be insupportable. Already I owe five guineas to Mrs. Arlbery, which the tumult of my mind since my return has prevented me from paying to my uncle; and I have left debts at Tunbridge that will probably take up all my next quarter's allowance!"

"As far as these three guineas will go," said Lavinia, taking out her purse. "here, my dearest Camilla, they are;—but how little that is! I never before thought my pittance too small! yet how well we all know my dear father cannot augment it."

Eugenia, who, in haste, had slept to her own room, now came back and putting twenty guineas into the hand of Camilla, said: "This, my beloved sister, is all I now have by me; but Jacob is rich and good, and will rejoice to pay the rest for us at present; and I shall very soon reimburse him, for my uncle has insisted upon making me a very considerable present, which I shall now, no longer refuse."

Camilla burst into tears, and, hanging about their necks: "O my sisters," she cried, "what goodness is yours! but how can I avail myself of it with any justice? Your three guineas, my Lavinia, your little all—how can I bear to take?"

"Do

"Do not teach me to repine, my dear Camilla, that I have no more! I am sure of being remembered by my uncle on the approaching occasions, and I can never, therefore, better spare my little store."

"You are all kindness! and you, my dear Eugenia, though you have more, have claims upon that more, and are both expected and used to answer them—"

"Yes, I have indeed more!" interrupted Eugenia, "which only sisters good as mine could pardon; but because my uncle has made me his heiress, has he made me a brute? No! whatever I have, must be amongst us all in common, not only now, but—" She stopped, affrighted at the idea she was presenting to herself, and fervently clasping her hands, exclaimed: "O long—long may it be ere I can shew my sisters all I feel for them! they will believe it, I am sure—and that is far happier!"

The idea this raised struck them all, at the same moment, to the heart. Not one of them had dry eyes, and with a sadness overpowering every other consideration, they sighed as heavily, and with looks as disconsolate, as if the uncle so dear to them were already no more.

The influence of parts, the predominance of knowledge, the honour of learning, the captivation of talents, and even the charm of fame itself, all shrink in their effects before the superior force of goodness, even where most simple and uncultivated, for power over the social affections.

* * * *

At an early hour, the next morning, the commission, with the twenty guineas in hand, and the promise of the rest in a short time, were given to Jacob; and Camilla, then, begged permission of her father, and the carriage of her uncle, to visit Mrs. Arlbery, who, she had heard, was just returned to the Grove.

Concluding she wished to be the messenger of her own affairs to that lady, they made no opposition, and she set off before eight o'clock, without entering the

parlour, where Edgar, she was informed, was already arrived for breakfast.

The little journey was terrible to her; scenes of disappointment and despair on the part of Sir Sedley, were anticipated by her alarmed imagination, and she reproached herself for every word she had ever spoken, every look she had ever given, that could have raised any presumption of her regard.

The last note was written in the style of all the others, and not one ever expressed the smallest doubt of success; how dreadful then to break to him such news, at the very moment he might imagine she came to meet him with partial pleasure!

Mrs. Arlbery was not yet risen. Camilla inquired, stammering, if any company were at the house. None, was the answer. She then begged leave to walk in the garden till Mrs. Arlbery came down stairs.

She was not sorry to miss her; she dreaded her yet more than Sir Sedley himself, and hoped to see him alone.

Nevertheless, she remained a full hour in waiting, ruminating upon the wonder her disappearance would give to Edgar, and nearly persuaded some chance had anticipated her account to Sir Sedley, whose rage and grief were too violent to suffer him to keep his appointment.

This idea served but to add to her perturbation, when, at last, she saw him enter the garden.

All presence of mind then forsook her; she looked around to see if she could escape, but his approach was too quick for avoidance. Her eyes, unable to encounter his, were bent upon the ground, and she stood still, and even trembling, till he reached her.

To the prepossessed notions and vain character of Sir Sedley, these were symptoms by no means discouraging; with a confidence almost amounting to arrogance he advanced, pitying her distress, yet pitying himself still more for the snare in which it was involving him. He permitted his eyes for a moment to fasten upon her, to admire her, and to enjoy triumphantly her confusion in silence: "Ah, beautiful tyrant!" he then cried:

"if

"if this instant were less inappreciable, in what language could I upbraid thy unexampled abuse of power? thy lacerating barbarity?"

He then, almost by force, took her hand; she struggled eagerly to recover it, but "No," he cried, "fair torturer! it is now my prisoner, and must be punished for its inhuman sins, in the congealing and unmerciful lines it has portrayed for me."

And then, regardless of her resistance, which he attributed to mere bashfulness, he obstinately and incessantly devoured it with kisses, in defiance of opposition, supplication, or anger, till, suddenly and piercingly, she startled him with a scream, and snatched it away with a force irresistible.

Amazed, he stared at her. Her face was almost convulsed with emotion; but her eyes, which appeared to be fixed, directed him to the cause. At the bottom of the walk, which was only a few yards distant, stood Mandlebert.

Pale and motionless, he looked as if bereft of strength and faculties. Camilla had seen him the moment she raised her eyes, and her horror was uncontrollable. Sir Sedley, astonished at what he beheld, astonished what to think, drew back, with a supercilious kind of bow. Edgar, recalled by what he thought insolence to his recollection, advanced a few steps, and addressing himself to Camilla, said: "I had the commands of Sir Hugh to pursue you, Miss Tyrold, to give you immediate notice that Mr. Lynmere is arrived." He added no more, deigned not a look at Sir Sedley, but rapidly retreated, remounted his horse and galloped off.

Camilla looked after him till he was out of sight, with uplifted hands and eyes, deploring his departure, his mistake, and his resentment, without courage to attempt stopping him.

Sir Sedley stood suspended, how to act, what to judge. If Edgar's was the displeasure of a discarded lover, why should it so affect Camilla? if of a successful one, why came she to meet him? why had she received and answered his notes?

Finding she attempted neither to speak nor move, he again approached her, and saying, "Fair Incomprehensible!" would again have taken her hand; but rousing to a sense of her situation, she drew back, and with some dignity, but more agitation, cried: "Sir Sedley, I blush if I am culpable of any part of your mistake: but suffer me now to be explicit, and let me be fully, finally, and not too late understood. You must write to me no more; I cannot answer nor read your letters. You must speak to me no more, except in public society; you must go further, Sir Sedley—you must think of me no more."

"Horrible!" cried he, starting back; "you distress me past measure!"

"No, no, you will soon—easily—readily forget me."

"Inhuman! you make me unhappy past thought!"

"Indeed I am inexpressibly concerned; but the whole affair—"

"You shock, you annihilate me, you injure me in the tenderest point!"

Camilla now, amazed, cried, "what is it you mean, sir?"

"By investing me, fair barbarian, with the temerity of forming any claim that can call for repulse!"

Utterly confounded by so unexpected a disclaiming of all design, she again, though from far different sensations, cast up her eyes and hands. And is it, she thought, for a trifle such as this, so unmeaning, so unfeeling, I have risked my whole of hope and happiness?

She said, however, no more; for what more could be said? She coloured, past him, and hastily quitting the garden, told the footman to apologise to Mrs. Arlbery for her sudden departure, by informing her that a near relation was just arrived from abroad; and then got into the carriage and drove back to Cleves.

Sir Sedley followed carelessly, yet without aiming at overtaking her, and intreated, negligently, to be heard, yet said nothing which required the smallest answer.

Piqued

Piqued completely, and mortified to the quick, by the conviction which now broke in upon him of the superior ascendance of Mandlebert, he could not brook to have been thought in earnest when he saw he should not have been accepted, nor pardon his own vanity the affront it had brought upon his pride. He sung aloud an opera air till the carriage of Sir Hugh was out of sight, and then drove his phaeton to Clarendel-place, where he instantly ordered his post-chaise, and in less than an hour, set off on a tour to the Hebrides.

C H A P. XXXIV.

A Summons to Happiness.

CAMILLA had but just set out from Cleves, when Sir Hugh, consulting his weather-cocks, which a new chain of ideas had made him forget to examine, saw that the wind was fair for the voyage of his nephew; and heard, upon inquiry, that the favourable change had taken place the preceding day, though the general confusion of the house had prevented it from being heeded by any of the family.

With eagerness the most excessive, he went to the room of Eugenia, and bid her put on a smart hat to walk out with him, as there was no knowing how soon a certain person might arrive.

Eugenia, colouring, said she would rather stay within.

“Well,”

"Well," cried he, "you'll be neater, to be sure, for not blowing about in the wind; so I'll go take t'other girls."

Eugenia, left alone, became exceedingly fluttered. She could not bear to remain in the house under the notion of so degrading a consideration as owing any advantage to outward appearance; and fearing her uncle, in his extreme openness, should give that reason for her not walking, she determined to take a stroll by herself in the park.

She bent her steps towards a small wood at some distance from the house, where she meant to rest herself and read; for she had learnt of Dr. Orkborne never to be unprovided with a book: But she had not yet reached her place of intended repose, when the sound of feet made her turn round, and, to her utter consternation, she saw a young man, whose boots, whip, and foreign air, announced instantly to be Clermont Lynmere.

She doubted not but he was sent in pursuit of her; and though youthful timidity prompted her to shun him, she retained sufficient command over herself to check it, and to stop till he came up to her; while he, neither quickening nor slackening his pace as he approached, passed her with so little attention, that she was presently convinced he had scarce even perceived her.

Disconcerted by a meeting so strange, and so ill timed, she involuntarily stood still, without any other power than that of looking after him.

In a few minutes Molly Mill, running up to her, cried: "Dear Miss, have not you seen young Mr. Lynmere? He come by t'other way just as master, and Miss Margland, and Miss Lynmere, and Miss Tyrold, was gone to meet him by the great gate; and so he said he'd come and look who he could find himself."

Eugenia had merely voice to order her back. The notion of having a figure so insignificant as to be passed, without even exciting a doubt whom she might be, was cruelly mortifying. She knew not how to return to the house, and relate such an incident. She sat down under a tree to recollect herself.

Presently,

Presently, however, she saw the stranger turn quick about, and before she could rise, slightly touching his hat, without looking at her: "Pray, ma'am," he said, "do you belong to that house?" pointing to the mansion of Sir Hugh.

Faintly she answered, "Yes, sir;" and he then added: "I am just arrived, and in search of Sir Hugh and the young ladies; one of them they told me, was this way; but I can trace nobody. Have you seen any of them?"

More and more confounded, she could make no reply. Inattentive to her embarrassment, and still looking every way around, he repeated his question. She then pointed towards the great gate, stammering she believed they went that way. "Thank you," he answered, with a nod, and then hurried off.

She now thought no more of moving nor of rising; she felt a kind of stupor, in which, fixed, and without reflection, she remained, till, startled by the sound of her uncle's voice, she got up, made what haste she was able to the house by a private path, and ascended to her own room by a back stair-case.

That an interview to which she had so long looked forward, for which, with unwearied assiduity, she had so many years laboured to prepare herself, and which was the declared precursor of the most important æra of her life, should pass over so abruptly, and be circumstanced so awkwardly, equally dispirited and confused her.

In a few minutes, Molly Mill, entering, said: "They're all come back, and Sir Hugh's fit to eat the young squire up; and no wonder, for he's a sweet proper gentleman, as ever I see. Come, miss, I hope you'll put on something else, for that hat makes you look worse than any thing. I would not have the young squire see you such a figure for never so much."

The artlessness of unadorned truth, however sure in theory of extorting admiration, rarely, in practice, fails inflicting pain or mortification. The simple honesty of Molly redoubled the chagrin of her young mistress, who, sending her away, went anxiously to the

the looking-glass, whence, in a few moments, she perceived her uncle, from the window, laughing, and making significant signs to some one out of her sight. Extremely ashamed to be so surprised, she retreated to the other end of the room, though not till she had heard Sir Hugh say: "Ay, ay, she's getting ready for you; I told you why she would not walk out with us, so don't let's hurry her, though I can't but commend your being a little impatient, which I dare say so is she, only young girls can't so well talk about it."

Eugenia now found that Clermont had no suspicion he had seen her. Sir Hugh concluded she had left not her room, and asked no questions that could lead to the discovery.

Presently the baronet came up stairs himself, and tapping at the door, said: "Come, my dear, don't be too curious, the breakfast having been spoilt this hour already; besides your cousin's having nothing on himself but his riding dress."

Happy she could at least clear herself from so derogatory a design, she opened her door. Sir Hugh, surveying her with a look of surprise and vexation, exclaimed: "What my dear! an't you dizen'd yet? why I thought to have seen you in all your best things!"

"No, sir," answered she calmly; "I shall not dress till dinner-time."

"My dear girl," cried he, kindly, though a little distressed how to explain himself; there's no need you should look worse than you can help; though you can do better things, I know, than looking well at any time; only what I mean is, you should let him see you to the best advantage at the first, for fear of his taking any dislike before he knows about Dr. Orkborne, and that."

"Dislike, sir?" repeated she, extremely hurt; "if you think he will take any dislike—I had better not see him at all!"

"My dear girl, you quite mistake me, owing to my poor head's always using the wrong word; which is a remarkable

remarkable thing that I can't help. But I don't mean in the least to doubt his being pleased with you, except only at the beginning, from not being used to you; for as to all your studies, there's no more Greek and Latin in one body's face, than in another's; but, however, if you won't dress, there's no need to keep the poor boy in hot water for nothing."

He then took her hand, and rather dragged than drew her down stairs, saying as they went: I must wish you joy, though, for I assure you he's a very fine lad, and hardly a bit of a coxcomb."

The family was all assembled in the parlour, except Camilla, for whom the baronet had instantly dispatched Edgar, and Mr. Tyrold, who was not yet returned from a morning ride, but from whom Sir Hugh had ordered the great dinner bell to be rung, as a signal of something extraordinary.

Young Lynmere was waiting the arrival of Eugenia with avowed and unbridled impatience. Far from surmising it was her he had met in the park, he had concluded it was one of the maids, and thought of her no more. He asked a thousand questions in a breath when his uncle was gone. Was she tall? was she short? was she plump? was she lean? was she fair? was she brown? was she florid? was she pale? But as she asked them of every body, nobody answered; yet all were in some dismay at a curiosity implying such entire ignorance, except Indiana, who could not, without smirking, foresee the amazement of her brother at her cousin's person and appearance.

"Here's a noble girl for you!" cried Sir Hugh, opening the door with a flourish; "for all she's got so many best thing's, she's come down in her worst, for the sake of looking ill at the beginning, to the end that there may be no fault to be found afterwards; which is a wisdom that does honour to her education."

This was, perhaps, the first time an harangue from the baronet had been thought too short; but the sur-

ptise of young Lynmere, at the view of his destined bride, made him wish he would speak on, merely to annul any necessity for speaking himself. Eugenia aimed in vain to recover the calmness of her nature, or to borrow what might resemble it from her notions of female dignity. The injudicious speech of Sir Hugh, by publicly forcing upon the whole party the settled purpose of the interview, covered her with blushes, and gave a tremor to her frame that obliged her precipitately to seat herself, while her joined hands supplicated his silence.

"Well, my dear, well!" said he, kissing her, "don't let me vex you; what I said having no meaning, except for the best; though your cousin might as well have saluted you before you sat down, I think; which, however, I suppose may be out of fashion now, every thing changing since my time; which, Lord help me! it will take me long enough to learn."

Lynmere noticed not this hint, and they all seated themselves round the breakfast table; Sir Hugh scarce able to refrain from crying for joy, and continually exclaiming: "This is the happiest day of all my life, for all I've lived so long! To see us all together, at last, and my dear boy come home to his native old England!"

Miss Margland made the tea, and young Lynmere instantly and almost voraciously began eating of every thing that was upon the table. Indiana, when she saw her brother as handsome as her cousin was deformed, thought the contrast so droll, she could look at neither without tittering; Lavina observed, with extreme concern, the visible distress of her sister; Dr. Orkborne forbore to ruminate upon his work, in expectation, every moment, of being called upon to converse with the learned young traveller; but Sir Hugh alone spoke, though his delight and his loquacity joined to his pleasure in remarking the good old English appetite which his nephew had brought with him

him from foreign parts, prevented his being struck with the general taciturnity.

The entrance of Mr. Tyrold proved a relief to all the party, though a pain to himself. He suffered in seeing the distressed confusion of Eugenia, and felt something little short of indignation at the supercilious air with which Clermont seemed to examine her; holding his head high and back, as if measuring his superior height, while every line round his mouth marked that ridicule was but suppressed by contempt.

When Sir Hugh, at length, observed, that the young traveller uttered not a syllable, he exclaimed: "Lord help us! what fools it makes of us, being overjoyed! here am I talking all the talk to myself, while my young scholar says nothing! which I take to be owing to my speaking only English; which, however, I should not do, if it was not for the misfortune of knowing no other, which I can't properly call a fault, being out of no idleness, as that gentleman can witness for me; for I'll warrant nobody's taken more pains; but our heads won't always do what we want."

He then gave a long and melancholy detail of his studies and their failure.

When the carriage arrived with Camilla, young Lynmere loitered to a window, to look at it; Eugenia arose meaning to seize the opportunity to escape to her room; but seeing him turn round upon her moving, she again sat down, experiencing, for the first time, a sensation of shame for her lameness, which, hitherto, she had regularly borne with fortitude, when she had not forgotten from indifference; neither did she feel spirits to exhibit again, before his tall and strikingly elegant figure, her diminutive little person.

Camilla entered with traces of a disordered mind too strongly marked in her countenance to have escaped observation, had she been looked at with any attention. But Eugenia and Lynmere ingrossed all eyes and all thoughts. Even herself, at first sight of the husband elect of her sister, lost, for a moment, all personal consideration, and looked at him only with the interesting idea of the future fate of Eugenia. But it was only for a moment; when she turned round, and saw nothing of Edgar,
when

when her uncle's inquiry what had become of him convinced her he was gone elsewhere, her heart sunk, she felt sick, and would have glided out of the room, had not Sir Hugh, thinking her faint for want of her breakfast, begged Miss Margland to make her some fresh tea; adding, "As this is a day in which I intend us all to be happy alike, I beg nobody will go out of the room, for the sake of our enjoying it all together."

This summons to happiness produced the usual effect of such calls; a general silence, succeeded by a general yawning, and a universal secret wish of separation, to the single exception of Sir Hugh, who, after a pause, said, "Why nobody speaks but me! which I really think odd enough. However, my dear nephew, if you don't care for our plain English conversation, which, indeed, after all your studies, one can't much wonder at, nobody can be against you and the Doctor jabbering together a little of your Greek and Latin."

"Lynmere, letting fall his bread upon the table, leaned back in his chair, and, sticking his hands in his side, looked at his uncle with an air of astonishment.

"Nay" continued the baronet, "I don't pretend I should be much the wiser for it; however, it's what I've no objection to hear; so come, Doctor! you're the oldest; break the ice!"

A verse of Horace with which Dr. Orkborne was opening his answer, was stopt short, by the eager manner in which Lynmere re-seized his bread with one hand, while with the other, to the great discomposure of the exact Miss Margland, he stretched forth for the tea-pot, to pour out a basin of tea; not ceasing the libation till the sauce itself, overcharged, sent his beverage in trickling rills from the table-cloth to the floor.

The ladies all moved some paces from the table, to save their clothes; and Miss Margland reproachfully inquired if she had not made his tea to his liking.

"Don't mind it, I beg, my dear boy," cried Sir Hugh; "a little slop's soon wiped up; and we're all friends: so don't let that stop your Latin."

Lynmere, noticing neither the Latin, the mischief,



nor the consolation; finished his tea in one draught, and then said: "Pray, sir, where do you keep all your newspapers?"

"Newspapers, my dear nephew? I've got no newspapers: what would you have us do with a mere set of politics, that not one of us understand, in point of what may be their true drift; now we're all met together o'purpose to be comfortable?"

"No newspapers, sir?" cried Lynmere, rising, and vehemently ringing the bell; and, with a scornful laugh, adding, half between his teeth, "Ha! ha! live in the country without newspapers! a good joke, faith?"

A servant appearing, he gave orders for all the morning papers that could be procured.

Sir Hugh looked much amazed; but presently starting up, said, "My dear nephew, I believe I've caught your meaning, at last; for if you mean, as I take for granted, that we're all rather dull company, why I'll take your hint, and leave you and a certain person together, to make a better acquaintance; which you can't do so well while we're all by, on account of modesty."

Eugenia, frightened almost to sickness, caught by her two sisters; and Mr. Tyrold, tenderly compassionating her apprehensions, whispered to Sir Hugh to dispense with a *tête-à-tête* so early: and, taking her hand, accompanied her himself to her room, composing, and re-assuring her by the way.

Sir Hugh, though vexed, then followed, to issue some particular orders, the rest of the party dispersed, and young Lynmere remained with his sister.

Walking on tiptoe to the door, he shut it, and put his ear to the key-hole, till he no longer heard any footstep. Turning then hastily round, he flung himself, full length, upon a sofa, and burst into so violent a fit of laughter, he was forced to hold his sides.

Indiana, tittering, said, "Well, brother, how do you like her?"

"Like her!" he repeated, when able to speak;
"why

"why the old gentleman doats ! He can never, else, seriously suppose I'll marry her."

"He ! he ! he ! yes, but he does, indeed, brother. He's got every thing ready."

"Has he, faith ?" cried Lynmere, again rolling on the sofa, almost suffocated with violent laughter : from which suddenly recovering, he started up to stoam to a large looking-glass, and, standing before it, in an easy and most assured attitude, "Much obliged to him, 'pon honour !" he exclaimed : "Don't you think," turning carelessly, yet in an elegant position, round to his sister, "don't you think I am, Indiana ?"

"Me, brother ? la ! I'm sure I think she's the ugliest little fright, poor thing ! I ever saw in the world, poor thing ! such a little, short, dumpty, hump backed, crooked, limping figure of a fright—poor thing !"

"Yes, yes," cried he, changing his posture, but still undauntedly examining himself before the glass, "he has taken amazing care of me, I confess ; matched me most exactly !"

Then sitting down, as if to consider the matter more seriously, he took Indiana by the arm, and, with some displeasure, said, "Why, what does the old quoz mean ? Does he want me to toss him in a blanket ?"

Indiana tittered more than ever at this idea, till her brother angrily demanded of her, why she had not written herself some description of this young Hecate, to prepare him for her sight ? Sir Hugh having merely given him to understand that she was not quite beautiful.

Indiana had no excuse to plead, but that she did not think of it. She had, indeed, grown up with an aversion to writing, in common with whatever else gave trouble, or required attention ; and her correspondence with her brother rarely produced more than two letters in a year, which were briefly upon general topics, and read by the whole family.

She now related to him the history of the will, and the vow, which only in an imperfect, and but half-cre-dined manner had reached him.

His laughter then gave place to a storm of rage. He called

called himself ruined, blasted, undone ; and abused Sir Hugh as a good-for-nothing dotard, defrauding him of his just rights and expectations.

" Why, that's the reason," said Indiana, " he wants to marry you to cousin Eugenia ; because, he says, it's to make you amends."

This led him to a rather more serious consideration of the affair ; for, he protested the money was what he could not do without. Yet, again parading to the glass, " What a shame, Indiana," he cried, " what a shame would it be to make such a sacrifice ? If he'll only pay a trifle of money for me, and give me a few odd hundreds to begin with, I'll hold him quit of all else, so he'll but quit me of that wizen little stump."

A newspaper, procured from the nearest public house, being now brought, he pinched Indiana by the chin, said she was the finest girl he had seen in England, and whistled off to his appointed chamber.

Clermont Lynmere so entirely resembled his sister in person, that now in his first youth, he might almost have been taken for her, even without change of dress : but the effect produced upon the beholders bore not the same parallel : what in her was beauty in its highest delicacy, in him seemed effeminacy in its lowest degradation. The brilliant fairness of his fore-head, the transparent pink of his cheeks, the pouting vermilion of his lips, the liquid lustre of his languishing blue eyes, the minute form of his almost infantine mouth, and the snowy whiteness of his small hands and taper fingers, far from bearing the attraction which, in his sister, rendered them so lovely, made him considered by his own sex as an unmanly sop, and by the women, as too conceited to admire any thing but himself.

With respect to his understanding, his superiority over his sister was rather in education than in parts, and in practical intercourse with the world, than in any higher reasoning faculties. His character, like his person, wanted maturing, the one being as distinct from intellectual decision, as the other from masculine dignity. He had youth without diffidence, sprightliness without wit, opinion without judgment, and learning without knowledge.

knowledge. Yet, as he contemplated his fine person in the glass, he thought himself without one external fault; and, early cast upon his own responsibility, was not conscious of one mental deficiency.

C H A P. XXXV.

Offs and Ons.

MR. TYROLD left Eugenia to her sisters, unwilling to speak of Lynmere till he had seen something more of him. Sir Hugh, also, was going, for he had no time, he said, to lose in his preparations; but Eugenia, taking his arm, besought that nothing of that kind might, at present, be mentioned.

"Don't trouble yourself about that, my dear," he answered; "for it's what I take all into my own hands; your cousin being a person that don't talk much; by which, how can any thing be brought forward, if nobody interferes? A girl, you know, my dear, can't speak for herself, let her wish it never so much."

"Alas!" said Eugenia, when he was gone, "how painfully am I situated! Clermont will surely suppose this precipitance all mine; and already, possibly, concludes it is upon my suggestion he has thus prematurely been called from his travels, and impeded in his praiseworthy ambition of studying the laws, manners, and customs of the different nations of Europe!"

The wan countenance of Camilla, soon, however, drew all observation upon herself, and obliged her to narrate the cruel adventure of the morning.

The sisters were both petrified by the account of Sir Sedley; and their compassion for his expected despair was changed into disgust at his insulting impertinence.

They

They were of opinion that his bird and his letters should immediately be returned; and their horror of any debt with a character mingling such presumption with such levity, made Eugenia promise that, as soon as she was mistress of so much money, she would send him, in the name of Lionel, his two hundred pounds.

The bird, therefore, by Tom Hodd, was instantly conveyed to Clarendel-Place; but the letters Camilla retained, till she could first shew them to Edgar,—if this event had not lost him to her for ever, and if he manifested any desire of an explanation.

* * * *

Edgar himself, meanwhile, in a paroxysm of sudden misery, and torturing jealousy, had galloped furiously to the rectory of Cleves.

“O, Doctor Marchmont!” he cried “what a tale have I now to unfold! Within these last twenty-four hours I have been the most wretched—the happiest—and again the most agonized of human beings! I have thought Camilla bestowed upon another,—I have believed her,—oh, Doctor!—my own!—I have conceived myself at the summit of all earthly felicity!—I find myself, at this moment deluded and undone!”

He then detailed the account, calling upon the Doctor to unravel to him the insupportable ænigma of his destiny; to tell him for what purpose Camilla had shewn him a tenderness so bewitching, at the very time she was carrying on a clandestine intercourse with another? with a man, who, though destitute neither of wit nor good qualities, it was impossible she should love, since she was as incapable of admiring as of participating in his defects? To what incomprehensible motives attribute such incongruities? Why accept and suffer her friends to accept him, if engaged to Sir Sedley? why, if seriously meaning to be his, this secret correspondence? Why so early, so private, so strange a meeting? “Whence, Doctor Marchmont, the daring boldness of his seizing her hand? whence the never-to-be-forgotten licence with which he presumed to lift it to his lips,—and there hardily to detain it, so

as

as never man durst do, whose hopes were not all alive, from his own belief in their encouragement ! explain, expound to me this work of darkness and amazement ; tell me why, with every appearance of the most artless openness, I find her thus eternally disingenuous and unintelligible ? why, though I have cast myself wholly into her power, she retains all her mystery—she heightens it into deceit next perjury ?”

“ Ask me, my dear young friend, why the sun does not give night, and the moon day ; then why women practise coquetry. Alas ! my season for surprise has long been passed ! They will rather trifle, even with those they despise, than be candid even with those they respect. The young baronet, probably has been making his court to her, or she has believed such was his design ; but as you first came to the point, she would not hazard rejecting you, while uncertain if he were serious. She was, possibly, putting him to the test, by the account of your declaration, at the moment of your unseasonable intrusion.”

“ If this, Doctor, is your statement, and if your statement is just, in how despicable a lottery have I risked the peace of my life ! You suppose then—that, if sure of Sir Sedley—I am discarded ?”

“ You know what I think of your situation : can I, when to yet more riches I add a title, suppose that of Sir Sedley less secure ?”

The shuddering start, the distracted look of Edgar, with his hand clapped to his burning forehead, now alarmed the Doctor ; who endeavoured to somewhat soften his sentence, dissuading him against any immediate measures, and advising him to pass over these first moments of emotion, and then coolly to suffer inquiry to take place of decision. But Edgar could not hear him ; he shook hands with him, faintly smiled, as an apology for not speaking ; and hurrying off, without waiting for his servant, galloped toward the New Forest : leaving his absence from Cleves to declare his defection, and bent only to fly from Camilla, and all that belonged to her.

All, however, that belonged to Camilla was precisely

ly what followed him; pursued him in every possible form, clung to his heart-strings, almost maddened his senses. He could not bear to reflect; retrospection was torture, anticipation was horror. To lose thus, without necessity, without calamity, the object of his dearest wishes, —to lose her from mere declension of esteem—

“Any inevitable evil,” he cried, “I could have sustained; any blow of fortune, however severe; any stroke of adversity, however terrible;—but this—this error of all my senses—this deception of all my hopes—this extinction of every feeling I have cherished”—

He rode on yet harder, leaping over every thing, thoughtless rather than fearless of every danger he could encounter, and galloping with the speed and violence of some pursuit, though wholly without view, and almost without consciousness; as if, hoping by flight, to escape from the degenerate portrait of Camilla: but its painter was his own imagination, and mocked the attempt.

From the other side of a five-barred gate, which, with almost frantic speed, he was approaching with a view to clear, a voice halloo'd to stop him; and, at the same time, a man who was leading one horse, and riding another, dismounted, and called out, “Why, as sure as I'm alive, it's Squire Mandlebert!”

Edgar now, perceiving Jacob, was going to turn back to avoid him; but, restraining this first movement, faintly desired him to stand by, as he had not a moment to lose.

“Good lack!” cried Jacob, with the freedom of an old servant, who had known him from a boy; “why, —I would not but have happened to come this way for never so much! why you might have broke your neck, else! Leap such a gate as this here? why I can't let you do no such a thing! Miss Camilla's like a child of my own, as one may say; and she'll never hold up her head again, I'll be bound for it, if you should come to any harm; and, as to poor old master! 'twould go nigh to break his heart.”

Struck with words which, from so faithful an old servant,

vant, could not but be touching, Edgar, was brought suddenly to himself, and felt the claim of the Tyrold family for a conduct more guarded. He endeavoured to put his own feelings apart, and consider how best he might spare those of the friends of Camilla; those of Camilla herself he concluded to be out of his reach, except as they might simply relate to the female pride and vanity of refusing rather than being given up.

He paused, now, to weigh how he might obviate any offence; and, after first resolving to write a sort of general leave-taking, and next, seeing the almost insuperable objections to whatever he could state, determined upon gaining time for deliberation, by merely commissioning Jacob to carry a message to Cleves, that some sudden affairs called him, for the present, to a distant part of the country. This, at such a period, would create a surprise that might lead the way to what would follow: and Camilla, who could not, he thought be much astonished, might then take her own measures for the defection she would see reason to expect.

But Jacob resisted bearing the intelligence: "Good-lack, sir," he cried, what have you got in your head! something that will do you no good, - I'll be bound, by the look of your eyes, which look as big as if they was both going to drop out; - you'd better come yourself and tell'em what's the matter, and speak a word to poor Miss Camilla, or she'll never believe but what some ill has betided you. Why we all knew about it, fast enough, before our master told us; servants have eyes as well as their masters; only Mary will have it she found it out at the first, which an't true, for I saw it by the time you'd been a week in the house; and if you'll take my word, squire, I don't think there's such another heart in the world as Miss Camilla's except just my own old master's."

Edgar leant against his horse, neither speaking nor moving, yet involuntarily listening, while deeply sighing.

"What a power of good she'll do," continued Jacob, "when she's mistress of Beech Park! I warrant she'll go about, visiting the poor, and making them clothes,
and

and broths, and wine possets, and baby-linen, all day long. She has done it at Etherington quite from a child; and when she had nothing to give 'em, she used to take her thread papers and needle books, and sit down and work for them, and carry them bits and scraps of things to help 'em to patch their gowns. Why when she's got your fine fortunes, she'll bring a blessing upon the whole country."

Edgar felt touched; his wrath was softened into tenderness, and he ejaculated to himself: "Such, indeed, I thought Camilla! active in charity, gentle in good works—I thought that in putting my fortune into her hands, I was serving the unhappy,—feeding the indigent,—reviving the sick!"

"Master," continued Jacob, "took a fancy to her from the very first, as well as I; and when master said she was coming to live with us, I asked to make it a holiday for all our folks, and master was as pleased as I. But nobody'd think what a tender heart she's got of her own, without knowing her, because of her singing and laughing, and dancing so, except when old Miss Margland's in the way, who's what Mr. Lionel calls a kill-joy at any time. Howbeit, I'll take special care she shan't be by when I tell her of my stopping you from breaking your neck here; but I wish you could be in a corner yourself, to peep at her, without her knowing it; I'll warrant you she'll give me such a smile, you'd be fit to eat her!"

Shaken once more in every resolution, because uncertain in every opinion, Edgar found the indignant desperation which had seized him begin to subside, and his mind again become assailable by something resembling hope. Almost instinctively he remounted his horse and almost involuntarily—drawn on by hearkening to the praise of Camilla, and fascinated by the dream made by Jacob of her regard, accompanied him back to Cleves.

As they rode into the park, and while he was earnestly endeavouring to form some palliation, by which he might exculpate what seemed to him so guilty in the strange meeting and its strange circumstances, he perceived

ceived Camilla herself, walking upon the lawn. He saw she had observed him, and saw, from her air, she seemed irresolute if to re-enter the house, or await him.

Jacob, significantly pointing her out, offered to shew the effect he could produce by what he could relate; but Edgar, giving him the charge of his house, earnestly besought him to retire in quiet, and to keep his opinions and experiments to himself.

Each now, separately, and with nearly equal difficulty, strove to attain fortitude to seek an explanation. They approached each other; Camilla with her eyes fixed upon the ground, her air embarrassed, and her cheeks covered with blushes; Edgar with quick, but almost tottering steps, his eyes wildly avoiding hers, and his complexion pale even to indisposition.

When they were met within a few yards, they stopt; Camilla still without courage to look up, and Edgar striving to speak, but finding no passage for his voice. Camilla, then, ashamed of her situation, raised her eyes, and forced herself to say, "Have you been into the house? Have you seen my cousin Lyamere?"

"No—madam."

Struck with a cold formality that never before, from Edgar, had reached her ears, and shocked by the sight of his estranged and altered countenance, with the cruel consciousness that appearances authorised the most depreciating suspicions, she advanced, and holding out her hand, "Edgar," she gently cried, "are you ill? or only angry?"

"O Camilla!" he answered, "can you deign to use to me such a word? can you distort my dearest affections, convulse my fairest hopes, eradicate every power of happiness—yet speak with so such sweetness—yet look at me with such mildness? such softness—I had almost said—such kindness?"

Deeply affected, she could hardly stand. He had taken her offered hand, but in a manner so changed from the same action the preceding day, that she scarce knew if he touched while he held it, scarce felt that he relinquished, as almost immediately she withdrew it.

But

But her condescension at this moment was rather a new torment than any solace to him. The hand which she proffered, and which the day before he had received as the token of permanent felicity, he had now seen in the possession of another, with every licence, every apparent mark of permitted rapture in which he had been indulged himself. He knew not to whom it of right belonged; and the doubt not merely banished happiness, but mingled resentment with misery.

"I see," cried she, after a mortified pause; "you have lost your good opinion of me—I can only, therefore—" She stopt, but his melancholy silence was a confirmation of her suggestion that offended her into more exertion, and, with sensibility raised into dignity, she added, "only hope your intended tour to the Continent may take place without delay!"

She would then have walked on to the house; but following her, "Is all over?" he cried, "and is it thus, Camilla, we part?"

"Why not?" said she, suppressing a sigh, yet turning back.

"What a question! cruel Camilla! Is this all the explanation you allow me?"

"What other do you wish?"

"All!—every other!—that meeting—those letters—"

"If you have any curiosity yet remaining—only name what you desire."

"Are you indeed so good?" cried he, in a voice that shewed his soul again melting; "those letters, then—"

"You shall have them—every one!" she cried, with alacrity; and instantly taking out her pocket-book, presented him with the prepared packet.

"Penetrated by this unexpected openness and compliance, he snatched her hand, with intent to press it to his lips; but again the recollection he had seen that liberty accorded to Sir Sedley, joined to the sight of his writing, checked him; he let it go; bowed his thanks with a look of grateful respect, and attempting no more to stop her, walked towards the summer-house, to peruse the letters.

C H A P. XXXVI.

Resolutions.

THE sound of the dinner-bell, which rang in the ears of Edgar before he reached his intended retreat, would have been unnoticed, if not seconded by a message from Sir Hugh, who had seen him from his window.

Compelled to obey, though in a state of suspense almost intolerable, he put up the important little packet, and repaired to the dining parlour; where, though none were equally disturbed with himself, no one was at ease. Young Lynmere, under an appearance of mingled assurance and apathy, the effect of acquired conceit, playing upon natural insipidity, was secretly tormented with the rueful necessity of sacrificing either a noble fortune, or his own fine person; Sir Hugh felt a strange disappointment from the whole behaviour of his nephew, though it was what he would not acknowledge, and could not define; Mr. Tyrold saw with much uneasiness the glaringly apparent unsuitableness of the intended alliance; Edgenia had never yet thought herself so plain and insignificant, and felt as if, even since the morning, the small-pox had renewed its ravages, and she had sunk into being short; Indiana and Miss Margland were both acutely incensed with Mansfield; Dr. Orkborne saw but small reason to expect gratitude for his labours from the supercilious negligence of the bearded young student; Lavinia was disturbed for both her sisters; and Camilla felt that all she valued in life depended upon the next critical hour or two.

In this state of general discomfort, Sir Hugh, who could

could never be silent, alone talked. Having long prepared himself to look upon this meeting as a day of happiness, he strove to believe, for a while, the whole family were peculiarly enjoying themselves ; but, upon a dead silence, which ensued upon his taking a copious draught of Madeira and water, " Why, my dear nephew," he cried, putting down his goblet, " you don't tell us any thing ? which I've no doubt but you know why yourself. However, as we're all met o' purpose to see you, I can't say I should be sorry to hear the sound of your voice, provided it won't be disagreeable."

" We are not much—conversant, sir, in each other's connexions, I believe," answered Lynmore, without ceasing a moment to eat, and to help himself, and ordering a fresh plate at every second mouthful ; " I have seen nothing, yet, of your folks hereabouts ; and, I fancy, sir, you don't know a great deal of the people I have been used to."

Sir Hugh, having good humouredly acknowledged this to be truth, was at a loss what further to purpose ; and, imagining the taciturnity of the rest of the party to proceed from an awe of the knowledge and abilities of his nephew, soon became himself so infected with fear and reverence, that, though he could not be silent, he spoke only to those who were next him, and in a whisper.

When the dessert was served, something like a general relief was effected by the unexpected entrance of Dr. Marchmont. Alarmed by the ungoverned, and, in him, unprecedented, emotions of Edgar, he had been to Beech Park ; and, finding he had not returned there, had ridden on, in the most uneasy uncertainty, to inquire for him at Cleves.

Happy to see him safe, though almost smiling to see with whom, he was beginning some excuse for his intrusion, when the baronet saved his proceeding, by calling out, " Well, this is as good a piece of good luck as any we've met with yet ! Here's Dr. Marchmont come to wish us joy ; and he's as good a scholar as yourself, nephew, for any thing I know to the

contrary, why you need not be so afraid of speaking, for the sake of our not understanding you; which here's five of us can do now, as well as yourself."

Lynmere, readily concluding Mr. Tyrold and Edgar, with the two Doctors, made four, glanced round the table to see who might be the fifth; when, supposing it Miss Margland, he withdrew his eyes with a look of derision, and, turning to the butler, asked what wines he might call for.

Sir Hugh then proposed that they should all pair off; the ignorant ones going one way, and the learned ones staying another.

It would be difficult to say which looked most averse to this proposition, Eugenia, or the young traveller; who hastily said, "I always ride after dinner, sir. Is your groom at hand? Can he shew me your horses?"

"My nephew little suspects," cried Sir Hugh, winking, "Eugenia belongs to the scholars! Ten to one but he thinks he's got Homer and Horace to himself! But here, my dear boy, as you're so fond of the classics"—

Clermont, nimbly rising, and knocking down a decanter of water in his haste, but not turning back to look at it, nor staying to offer any apology, affected not to hear his uncle, and flung hastily out of the room, calling upon Indiana to follow him.

"In the name of all the *Diavoli*," cried he, pulling her into the park with him, "what does all this mean? Is the old gentleman *non compos*? what's all this stuff he descants upon so freely, of scholars, and classics, and Homer, and Horace?"

"O you must ask Eugenia, not me!" answered Indiana, scornfully.

"Why, what does Eugenia know of the matter?"

"Know? why every thing. She's a great scholar, and has been brought up by Dr. Orborne; and she talks Greek and Latin."

"Does she so? then, by the Lord! she's no wife of mine! I'd as soon marry the old Doctor himself!"

self! and I'm sure he'd make me as pretty a wife. Greek and Latin! why, I'd as soon tie myself to a rod. Pretty sort of dinners she'll give!"

"O dear, yes, brother; she don't care what she eats; she cares for nothing but books, and such kind of things."

"Books! ha! ha! Books, and Latin and Greek! upon my faith, a pretty wife the old gentleman has been so good as to find me! why he must be a downright driveller!"

"Ah, brother, if we had all that fortune, what a different figure we should cut with it!"

"Why, yes, I rather flatter myself we should. No great need of five thousand a year to pore over books! Ha! ha! faith, this is a good hum enough! So he thinks to take me in, does he?"

"Why, you know, she is so rich, brother."—

"Rich? well, and what am I? do you see such a figure as this," (suddenly skipping before her,) "every day? Am I reduced to my last legs, think you? Do you suppose I can't meet with some kind old dowager any time these twenty years?"

"La, brother, won't you have her then?"

"No, faith, won't I! It's not come to that, neither. This learning is worse than her ugliness; 'twould make me look like a dunce in my own house."

He then protested he had rather lose forty estates, than so be sacrificed, and vowed, without venturing a direct refusal, he would soon ficken the old gentleman of his scheme.

* * * *

Eugenia, in retreating to her room, was again accompanied by her father and her uncle, whom she conjured now, to name her to Clermont no more.

"I can't say I admire these puttings off, my dear," said the baronet, "in this our mortal state, which is always liable to end in our dying. Not that I pretend to tell you I think him over much alert; but there's

no knowing but what he may have some meaning in it that we can't understand ; a person having studied all his life, has a right to a little particularity."

Mr. Tyrold himself now seriously interfered, and desired that, henceforth, Clermont might be treated as if his visit to Cleves was merely to congratulate his uncle upon his recovery ; and that all schemes, preparations, and allusions, might be put aside, unless the youth himself, and with a good grace, brought them forward ; mean while, he and Lavinia would return without delay to Etherington, to obviate all appearance of waiting the decision of any plan.

Sir Hugh was much discomfited by the exaction of such forbearance, yet could the less oppose it, from his own internal discontent with his nephew, which he inadvertently betrayed, by murmuring, in his way to his chamber, " There's no denying but what they've got some odd-fangled new ways of their own, in those foreign parts ; meeting a set of old relations for the first time, and saying nothing to them, but asking for the newspapers ! Lord help us ! caring about the wide world, so, when we know nothing of it, instead of one's own uncles and nephews, and kinspeople !"

* * * *

During this time, Edgar, almost agonised by suspense and doubt, had escaped to the summer-house, whither he was followed by Dr. Marchmont, greatly to the wonder, almost with the contempt of Dr. Orkborne ; whom he quitted, in anxiety for his young friend, just as he had intimated a design to consult him upon a difficult passage in an ancient author, which had a place in his work, that was now nearly ready for the press.

" I know well, Doctor," said Edgar, " that to find me here, after all that has passed, will make you conclude me the weakest of men—but I cannot now explain how it has been brought about—these letters must first tell me if Camilla and I meet more than once again."

He

He then hastily ran over the letters ; but by no means hastily could he digest, nor even comprehend their contents. He thought them florid, affected, and presuming ; yet vague, studied, with little appearance of sincerity, and less of explicit decision. What related to Lionel, and to aiding him in the disposal of his wealth, seemed least intelligible, yet most like serious meaning ; but when he found that the interview at the Grove was by positive appointment, and granted to a request made with a forwardness and assurance so wide from all delicacy and propriety, the blood mounted high into his cheeks, and precipitately putting up the packet, he exclaimed : “ Here, then, it ends ! the last little ray of hesitation is extinct—extinct to be kindled never more ! ”

The sound of these last words caused him an emotion of sorrow he was unable to resist, though unwilling to betray, and he hurried out of the summer-house to the wood, where he strove to compose his mind to the last leave-taking upon which he was now determined ; but so dreadful was the resolution which exacted from his own mouth the resignation of all that, till now, had been dearest to his views and hopes, that the afternoon was far advanced, before he could assume sufficient courage to direct his steps to the spot where the sacrifice was to be made.

Accusing, himself, then, of weakness unpardonable, he returned to the summer-house, to apologise to Dr. Marchmont for his abrupt retreat ; but the Doctor had already re-entered the mansion. Thither, therefore, he proceeded, purposing to seek Camilla, to return her the letters of Sir Sedley, and to desire her commands in what manner to conduct himself with her father and her uncle, in acknowledging his fears that the projected union would fail of affording, to either party, the happiness which, at first, it seemed to promise.

The carriage of Sir Hugh was in waiting at the door, and Mr. Tyrold and Lavinia were in the hall. Edgar, in no condition for such an encounter, would have avoided them ; but Mr. Tyrold, little suspecting

ing his desire, rejoiced at the meeting, saying he had had the house searched for him in vain, that he might shake hands with him before his return to Exeterington.

Then, taking him apart, "My dear Edgar," he cried, "I have long loved you as tenderly, and I may now confide in you as completely, as if you were my son. I go hence in some inquietude; I fear my brother has been too hasty in making known his view with regard to Clermont; who does not seem equal to appreciating the worth of Eugenia, though it is evident he has not been slack in noticing her misfortunes. I entreat you, during my absence, to examine him as if you were already the brother of that dear child, who merits, you well know, the best and tenderest of husbands."

He then followed Lavinia into the carriage, prevented by his own occupied mind from observing the fallen countenance of Edgar, who, more wretched than ever, bemoaned now the kindness of which he had hitherto been proud, and lamented the paternal trust which he would have purchased the day before almost with life.

* * * *

Camilla, during this period, had gone through conflicts no less severe.

Jacob, who had bought a horse, for which he had cheerfully advanced 20*l.* had informed her of the gate adventure of Edgar, and told her that, but for his stopping him, he was riding like mad from Cleres, and only sending them all a message that he could not come back.

Grieved, surprised, and offended, she instantly determined she would not risk such another mark of his cold superiority, but restore to him his liberty, and leave him master of himself. "If the severity of his judgment," cried she, "is so much more potent than the warmth of his affection, it shall not be his delicacy, nor his compassion, that shall make me his. I will neither be the wife of his repentance nor of his pity.

I must

I must be convinced of his unaltered love, his esteem, his trust—or I shall descend to humiliation, not rise to happiness, in becoming his. Softness here would be meanness ; submission degrading—if he hesitates—let him go !”

She then, without weighing, or even seeing one objection, precipitately resolved to beg permission of her friends, to accept an invitation she had received, without as yet answering, to meet Mrs. Berlington at Southampton, where that lady was going to pass some weeks. She could there, she thought, give the rejection which here its inviolable circumstances made her, for Lionel's sake, afraid to risk ; or she could there, if a full explanation should appease him, find opportunity to make it with equal safety ; his dislike to that acquaintance rather urged than impeded her plan, for her wounded spirit panted to prove its independence and dignity.

Eugenia approved this elevation of sentiment, and doubted not it would shew her again in her true light to Edgar, and bring him, with added esteem, to her feet.

Camilla wept with joy at the idea : “ Ah !” she cried, “ if such should be my happy fate ; if, after hearing all my imprudence, my precipitance, and want of judgment, he should voluntarily, when wholly set free, return to me—I will confess to him every feeling—and every failing of my heart ! I will open to him my whole soul, and cast myself ever after upon his generosity and his goodness—O, my Eugenia ! almost on my knees could I receive—a second time—the vows of Edgar Mandlebert !”

C H A P. XXXVII.

Ease and Freedom.

LYNMERE, at tea-time, returned from his ride, with a fixed plan of frightening or disgusting the baronet from the alliance ; with Eugenia, herself, he imagined the attempt would be vain, for he did not conceive it possible any woman who had eyes could be induced to reject him.

Determined, therefore, to indulge, in full, both the natural presumption and acquired luxuriance of his character, he conducted himself in a manner that, to any thing short of the partiality of Sir Hugh, would have rendered him insupportably offensive : but Sir Hugh had so long cherished a reverence for what he had himself ordered with regard to his studies, and what he implicitly credited of his attainments, that it was more easy to him to doubt his senses, than to suppose so accomplished a scholar could do any thing but what was right.

"Your horses are worth nothing, sir," cried he, in entering ; "I never rode so unpleasant a beast. "I don't know who has the care of your stud ; but whoever it is, he deserves to be hanged."

Sir Hugh could not refuse, either to his justice or his kindness, to vindicate his faithful Jacob ; and for his horses he made as many excuses, as if every one had been a human creature, whom he was recommending to his mercy, with a fear they were unworthy of his favour.

Not a word was said more, except what Miss Margland, from time to time, extorted, by begging questions, in praise of her tea, till Lynmere, violently ringing the bell, called out to order a fire.

Every body was surprised at this liberty, without any previous demand of permission from the baronet,
or

or any inquiry into the feelings of the rest of the company; and Sir Hugh, in a low voice, said to Eugenia, "I am a little afraid poor Mary will be rather out of humour to have the grate to polish again to-morrow morning, in the case my nephew should not like to have another fire then; which, I suppose, if the weather continues so hot, may very likely not be agreeable to him."

Another pause now ensued; Dr. Marchmont, who, of the whole party, was alone, at this time, capable of leading to a general conversation, was separately occupied by watching Camilla; while himself, as usual, was curiously and unremittingly examined by Dr. Orkborne, in whom so much attention to a young lady raised many private doubts of the justice of his scholastic fame; which soon, by what he observed of his civility even to Miss Margland, were confirmed nearly to scepticism.

Mary, now, entering with a coal scuttle and a candle, Lynmere, with much displeasure, called out, "Bring wood; I hate coals."

Mary, as much displeased, and nearly as much humoured as himself, answered that nothing but coals were ever burnt in that grate.

"Take it all away, then, and bid my man send me my pelisse. That I made to cross the Alps in."

"I am very sorry, indeed, nephew," said Sir Hugh, "that we were not better prepared for your being so chilly, owing to the weather being set in so sultry, that we none of us much thought of having a fire; and, indeed, in my young time, we were never allowed thinking of such things before Michaelmas-day; which I suppose is quite behind-hand now. Pray, nephew, if it is not too much trouble to you, what's the day for lighting fires in foreign parts?"

"There's no rule of that sort, now, sir, in modern philosophy; that kind of thing's completely out; entirely exploded, I give you my word."

"Well, every thing's new, Lord help me, since I was born! But pray, nephew, if I may ask, without tiring you too much, on account of my ig-

norance, have they fires in summer as well as winter there?"

"Do you imagine there are grates and fires on the Continent, sir, the same as in England? ha! ha!"

Sir Hugh was discountenanced from any further inquiry.

Another silence ensued, broken again by a vehement ringing of the bell.

When the servant appeared, "What have you got," cried Lynmere, "that you can bring me to eat?"

"Eat, nephew! why you would not eat before supper, when here's nobody done tea? not that I'd have you baulk your appetite, which, to be sure, ought to be the best judge."

The youth ordered some oysters.

There were none in the house.

He desired a barrel might immediately be procured; he could eat nothing else.

Still Edgar, though frequent opportunities occurred, had no fortitude to address Camilla, and no spirits to speak. To her, however, his dejection was a revival; she read in it her power, and hoped her present plan would finally confirm it.

A servant now came in, announcing a person who had brought two letters, one for Sir Hugh, the other for Miss Camilla, but who said he would deliver them himself. The baronet desired he might be admitted.

Several minutes passed, and he did not appear. The wonder of Sir Hugh was awakened for his letter; but Camilla, dreading a billet from Sir Sedley, was in no haste.

Lynmere, however, glad of an opportunity to issue orders, or make disturbance, furiously rang the bell, saying: "Where are these letters?"

"Jacob," said the baronet, "my nephew don't mean the slowness to be any fault of yours, it being what you can't help; only tell the person than brought us our letters, we should be glad to look at them, not knowing who they may be from."

"Why

"Why he seems but an odd sort of fish, sir; I can't much make him out; he's been begging some flour to put in his hair; he'll make himself so spruce, he says, we sha'n't know him again; I can't much think he's a gentleman."

He then, however, added he had made a mistake, as there was no letter for his master, but one for Miss Camilla, and the other for Miss Margland.

"For me?" exclaimed Miss Margland, breaking from a scornful silence, during which her under lip had been busy to express her contempt of the curiosity excited upon this subject. "Why how dare they not tell me it was for me? it may be from somebody of consequence, about something of importance, and here's half a day lost before I can see it!"

She then rose to go in search of it herself, but opened the door upon Mr. Dubster:

A ghost, could she have persuaded herself she had seen one, could not more have astonished, though it would more have dismayed her. She drew haughtily back, saying: "Is there nobody else to come?"

The servant answered in the negative, and she retreated to her chair.

Camilla alone was not perplexed by this sight; she had already, from the description, suggested whom she might expect, according to the intimation given by the ever mischievous Lionel.

Miss Margland, concluding he would turn out to be some broken tradesman, prepared herself to expect that the letter was a petition; and watched for an opportunity to steal out of the room.

Mr. Dubster made two or three low bows, while he had his hand upon the door, and two or three more when he had shut it. He then cast his eyes round the room, and espying Camilla, with a leering sort of smile, said: "O, you're there, ma'am! I should find you out in a hundred. I've got a letter for you, ma'am, and another for the gentlewoman I took for your mamma; and I was not much out in my guess, for there's no great difference, as one may say, between a mamma and a governess; only the mother's the more natural, like."

He

He then presented her a letter, which she hastily put up, not daring to venture at a public perusal, lest it might contain not merely something ludicrous concerning Mr. Dubster, to which she was wholly indifferent, but allusions to Sir Sedley Clarendel, which, in the actual situation of things, might be fatally unseasonable.

"And now," said Mr. Dubster, "I must give up my other letter, asking the gentlewoman's pardon for not giving it before; only I was willing to give the young lady her's first, young ladies being apt to be more in a hurry than people a little in years."

This address did not much add to the benevolent eagerness of Miss Margland to read the epistle, and endeavouring to decline accepting it: "Really," she said, "unless I know what it's about, I'm not much used to receiving letters in that manner."

"As to what it's about," cried he, with a half-suppressed simper, and nodding his head on one side; "that's a bit of a secret, as you'll see when you've read it."

"Indeed, good man, I wish you very well; but as to reading all the letters that every body brings one, it requires more time than I can pretend to have to spare, upon every trifling occasion."

She would then have retired; but Mr. Dubster, stopping her, said: "Why, if you don't read it, ma'am, nobody'll be never the wiser for what I come about, for it's ungain-like to speak for one's self; and the young gentleman said he'd write to you, because, he said, you'd like it the best."

"The young gentleman? what young gentleman?"

"Young squire Tyrold; he said you'd be as pleased as any thing to tell it to the old gentleman yourself; for you was vast fond, he said, of matrimony."

"Matrimony? what have I to do with matrimony?" cried Miss Margland, reddening and bridling; "if it's any vulgar trick of that kind, that Mr. Lionel is amusing himself with, I'm not quite the right sort

fort of person to be so played upon ; and I desire, mister, you'll take care how you come to me any more upon such errands, lest you meet with your proper deserts."

" Dear heart ! I'm not going to offer any thing uncivil. As to matrimony, it's no great joke to a man, when once he's made his way in the world ; it's more an affair of you ladies by half."

" Of us ? upon my word ! this is a compliment rather higher than I expected. Mr. Lionel may find, however, I have friends who will resent such impertinence, if he imagines he may send who he will to me with proposals of this sort."

" Lauk, ma'am, you need not be in such a fright for nothing ! however, there's your letter, ma'am," putting it upon the table ; " and when you are in better cue, I suppose you'll read it."

Then, advancing to Camilla : " Now, ma'am, let's you and I have a little talk together ; but first, by good rights, I ought to speak to your uncle only I dont know which he is ; 'twill be mortal kind if you'll help a body out."

Sir Hugh was going to answer for himself, when Lynmere, fatigued with so long a scene in which he had no share, had recourse to his friend the bell, calling out, at the same time, in a voice of impatience, " No oysters yet !"

Sir Hugh now began to grow unhappy for his servants ; for himself he not only could bear any thing, but still concluded he had nothing to bear ; but his domestics began all to wear long faces, and, accustomed to see them happy, he was hurt to observe the change. No partiality to his nephew could disguise to him, that, long used to every possible indulgence, it was vain to hope they would submit, without murmuring, to so new a bondage of continual and peremptory commands. Instead of attending, therefore, to Mr Dubster, he considered what apology to offer to Jacob ; who suspecting by whom he was summoned, did not make his appearance till Lynmere had rung again.

" Where

"Where are these oysters?" he then demanded; "have you been eating them?"

"No, sir," answered he surlily; "we're not so sharp set; we live in Old England; we don't come from outlandish countries."

This true John Bullism, Lynmere had neither sense to despise, nor humour to laugh at; and, seriously in a rage, called out, "Sirrah, I'll break your bones!" and lifted up his riding switch, with which, as well as his boots, he had re-entered the parlour.

"The Lord be good unto me!" cried Sir Hugh, "what new ways are got into the world! but don't take it to heart, Jacob, for as to breaking your bones, after all your long services, it's a thing I sha'n't consent to; which I hope my nephew won't take ill."

Affronted with the master, and enraged with the man, Lynmere stroamed petulantly up and down the room, with loud and marked steps, that called, or at least disturbed the attention of every one, exclaiming, at every turning, "A confounded country this! a villainous country! nothing to be had in it! I don't know what in the world to think of that there's any chance I can get!"

Sir Hugh, recovering, said he was sorry he was so badly off; and desired Jacob not to fail procuring oysters if they were to be had within a mile.

"A mile?—ten miles! say ten miles round," cried Lynmere, "or you do nothing; what's ten miles for a thing of that sort?"

"Ten miles, nephew? what? at this time of night! why you don't think, with all your travelling, that when they've got ten miles there, they'll have ten miles to come back, and that makes count twenty."

"Well, Sir, and suppose it was forty; what have such fellows to do better?"

Sir Hugh blessed himself, and Mr. Dubster said to Camilla: "So, ma'am, why you don't read your letter, neither, no more than the gentlewoman; however, I think you may as well see a little what's in it; though I suppose no great matters, being from a lady."

"A lady!"

"A lady! what lady?" cried she, and eagerly taking it from her pocket, saw the hand-writing of Mrs. Berlington, and inquired how it came into his possession.

He answered, that happening to meet the lady's footman, whom he had known something of while in business, as he was going to put it to the post, he told him he was coming to the very house, and so took it to bring himself, the man being rather in a hurry to go another way; "so I thought 'twas as well, ma'am," he added, "to save you the postage; for as to a day or so sooner or later, I suppose it can break no great squares, in you ladies letter-writing."

Camilla, hastily running it over; found it contained a most pressing repetition of invitation from Mrs. Berlington for the Southampton plan, and information that she should make a little circuit, to call and take her up at Cleves, if not immediately forbidden; the time she named for her arrival, though four days distant from the date of her letter, would be now the following morning.

This seemed, to the agitated spirits of Camilla, an inviting opening to her scheme. She gave the letter to her uncle, saying, in a fluttered manner, she should be happy to accompany Mrs. Berlington, for a few days, if her father should not disapprove the excursion, and if he could himself have the goodness to spare one of the carriages to fetch her home, as Southampton was but sixteen miles off.

While Sir Hugh, amazed at this request, yet always unable to pronounce a negative to what she desired, stammered, Edgar abruptly took leave.

Thunderstruck by his departure, she looked affrighted, after him, with a sigh impossible to repress; she now first weighed the hazard of what she was doing, the deep game she was inconsiderately playing. Would it sunder—would it unite them?—Tears started into her eyes at the doubt; she did not hear her uncle's answer; she rose to hurry out of the room; but before she could escape, the big drops rolled fast down her cheeks; and, when arrived at her chamber,

"I have

"I have lost him!" she cried, by my own unreflecting precipitance; "I have lost him, perhaps, for ever!"

Dr. Marchmont now also took leave; Mr. Dubster desired he might speak with the baronet the next morning; and the family remained alone.

CHAP. XXXVIII.

Dilemmas.

WHILE the Baronet was pondering, in the most melancholy manner, upon this sudden and unexpected demand of absence in Camilla, the grim goddess of Envy took possession of the fine features of Indiana; who declared she was immured alive, while her cousin went every where. The curiosity of Lynmere being excited, to inquire what was to be had or done at Southampton, he heard it abounded in good company, and good fish, and protested he must undoubtedly set out for it the next morning.

Indiana then wept with vexation and anger, and Miss Margland affirmed, she was the only young lady in Hampshire, who had never been at Southampton. Sir Hugh, concluding Edgar would attend Camilla, feared it might hurt the other match to part Eugenia from Clermont; and, after a little pause, though deeply sighing at such a dispersion from Cleves, consented that they should all go together. Camilla, therefore, was commissioned to ask leave of Mr. Tyrold for Eugenia, as well as for herself, and to add a petition from Sir Hugh, that he and Lavinia would spend the time of their absence at Cleves. The baronet then, of his own accord, asked Dr. Orkborne
to

to be of the party, that Eugenia, he said, might run over her lessons with him in a morning, for fear of forgetting them.

A breach, however, such as this, of plans so long formed, and a desertion so voluntary of his house, at the very epoch he had settled for rendering its residence the most desirable, sent him in complete discomfiture to his bed. But there, in a few hours, his sanguine temper, and the kindness of his heart new modelled and new coloured the circumstances of his chagrin. He considered he should have full time to prepare for the double marriages; and that, with the aid of Lavinia, he might delight and amaze them all, with new dresses and new trinkets, which he could now choose without the torment of continual opposition from the documentising Miss Margland. Thus he restored his plastic mind to its usual satisfaction, and arose the next morning without a cloud upon his brow. The pure design of benevolence is to bestow happiness upon others, but its intrinsic reward is bringing happiness home!

But this sweetness of nature, so aptly supplying the first calls, and the first virtues of philosophy, was yet more severely again tried the next morning: for when, forgetting the caution he had solemnly promised, but vainly endeavoured to observe, he intimated to Lynmere these purposes, the youth, blushing at the idea of being taken for the destined husband of Eugenia in public, preferred all risks to being followed by such a rumour to Southampton; and, when he found she was to be of the party, positively declared the match to be out of all question.

Sir Hugh now stood aghast. Many had been his disappointments; his rage for forming schemes, and his credulity in persuading himself they would be successful, were sources not more fertile of amusement in their projection, than of mortification in their event: but here, the length of time since his plan had been arranged, joined to the very superficial view he had taken of any chance of its failure, had made him, by degrees, regard it as so fixed and settled, that it
rather

rather demanded congratulation than concurrence, rather waited to be enjoyed than executed.

Lynmere took not the smallest interest in the dismay of his uncle, but, turning upon his heel, said he would go to the stables, to see if he could find something that would carry him any better than the miserable jade he had mounted the preceding evening.

Sir Hugh remained in a kind of stupefaction. He seemed to himself to be bereft of every purpose of life; and robbed at once, of all view for his actions, all subject for his thoughts. The wide world, he believed, had never, hitherto, given birth to a plan so sagaciously conceived, so rationally combined, so infallibly secure: yet it was fallen, crushed, rejected!

A gleam of sunshine, however, ere long, emitted upon his despondence; it occurred to him, that the learned education of Eugenia was still a secret to her cousin; his whole scheme, therefore, might perhaps yet be retrieved, when Lynmere should be informed of the peculiar preparations made for his conjugal happiness.

Fetching now a long breath, to aid the revival of his faculties and his spirits, he considered how to open his discourse so as to render it most impressive, and then sent for Clermont to attend him in his chamber.

"Nephew," cried he, upon his entrance, "I am now going to talk to you a little in your own way, having something to tell you of, that, I believe, you won't know how to hold cheap, being a thing that belongs to your studies; that is to say, to your cousin's; which, I hope, is pretty much the same thing, at least as to the end. Now the case of what I have to say is this; you must know, nephew, I had always set my heart upon having a rich heir; but it's what did not turn out, which I am sorry enough for; but where's the man that's so wise as to know his own doom? that is, the doom of his fortune. However, that's what I should not talk of to you, having so little; which, I hope, you won't take to heart. And, indeed, it isn't much worth a wise man's

man's thinking of, when he han't got it, for what's a fortune, at bottom, but mere metal? And so having, as I said before, no heir, I'm forced, in default of it, to take up with an heiress. But, to the end of making all parties happy, I've had her brought up in the style of a boy, for the sake of your marrying her. For which reason, I believe, in point of the classics"—

"Me, sir!" cried Lynmere, recovering from a long yawning fit, "and what have I to do with marrying a girl like a boy? That's not my taste, my dear sir, I assure you. Besides, what has a wife to do with the classics? will they show her how to order her table? I suppose when I want to eat, I may go to a cook's shop!"

Here subsided, at once, every particle of that reverence Sir Hugh had so long nourished for Clermont Lynmere. To hear the classics spoken of with disrespect, after all the pains he had taken, all the orders he had given for their exclusive study and veneration, and to find the common calls of life, which he had believed every scholar regarded but as means of existence, not auxiliaries of happiness, named with preference, distanced, at a stroke, all high opinion of his nephew, and made way, in its stead, for a displeasure not wholly free from disdain.

"Well, Clermont," said he, after a pause, "I won't keep you any longer, now I know your mind, which I wish I had known before, for the account of your cousin, who has had plague enough about it in her bringing up; which, however, I shall put an end to now, not seeing that any good has come from it."

Lynmere joyfully accepted the permission to retire, enchanted that the rejection was thus completely off his mind, and had incurred only so slight a reproof, unaccompanied with one menace, or even remonstrance.

The first consternation of Sir Hugh, at the fall of this favourite project, was, indeed, somewhat lessened, at this moment, by the fall of his respectful opinion of its principal object. He sent therefore, hastily, for Eugenia, to whom he abruptly exclaimed, "My dear

dear girl, who'd have thought it? here's your cousin Clermont, with all his Greek and Latin, which I begin to bless God I don't know a word of, turning out a mere common nothing, thinking about his dinners and suppers! for which reason I beg you'll think of him no more, it not being worth your while; in particular, as he don't desire it."

Eugenia, at this intimation, felt nearly as much relieved as disturbed. To be refused was, indeed, shocking; not to her pride, she was a stranger to that passion; but to her delicacy, which pointed out to her, in strong colours, the impropriety of having been exposed to such a decision: nevertheless, to find herself unshackled from an alliance to which she looked forward with dread, without offending her uncle, to whom so many reasons made it dear, or militating against her own heroic sentiments of generosity, which revolted against wilfully depriving her cousin of an inheritance already offered to him, removed a weight from her mind, which his every word, look, and gesture, had contributed to increase since their first meeting.

* * * *

Dr. Marchmont had ridden to Beech Park, where he had spent the night, though uninvited by its agitated owner, whom the very name of Mrs Berlington, annexed to an accepted party of pleasure, had driven, in speechless agony, from Cleves.

"I wonder not," cried he. "at your disturbance; I feel for it, on the contrary, more than ever, from my observations of this evening; for I now see the charm, the potent charm, as well as the difficulties of your situation. This strange affair with Sir Sedley Clarendel cannot, in common foresight of what may ensue from it, be passed over without the most rigid scrutiny, and severest deliberation; yet, I sincerely hope, inquiry may produce some palliation: this young lady, I see, will not easily, for sweetness, for countenance, for every apparent attraction, be replaced: and, the first of all requisites is certainly in your favour;

vour; it is evident she loves you."

"Loves me?" cried Edgar, his arms involuntarily encircling him as he repeated the magnetising words: "Ah! Dr. Marchmont, could she then thus grieve and defy me?—And yet, so too said Jacob,—that good, faithful, excellent old servant"—

"Yes; I watched her unremittingly; and saw her so much hurt by your abrupt retreat, that her eyes filled with tears the moment you left the room."

"O, Dr. Marchmont!—and for me were they shed?—my dear—dear friend!—withhold from me such a picture—or reconcile me completely to viewing no other!"

"Once more, let me warn you to circumspection. The stake for which you are playing is life in its best part, 'tis peace of mind. That her manners are engaging, that her looks are captivating, and even that her heart is yours, admit no doubt: but the solidity or the lightness of that heart are yet to be proved."

"Still, Doctor, though nearly in defiance of all my senses, still I can doubt any thing rather than the heart of Camilla! Precipitate, I know, she has always been reckoned; but her precipitance is of kin to her noblest virtues; it springs but from the unsuspicious frankness of an unguarded, because innocent nature. And this, in a short time, her understanding will correct."

"Are you sure it is adequate to the task? There is often, in early youth, a quickness of parts which raises expectations that are never realised. Their origin is but in the animal spirits, which, instead of ripening into judgment and sense by added years, dwindle into nothingness, or harden into flippancy. The character, at this period, is often so unstable, as to be completely new moulded by every new accident, or new associate. How innumerable are the lurking ill qualities that may lie dormant beneath the smiles of youth and beauty, in the season of their untried serenity! The contemporaries of half our fiercest viragos of fifty, may assure you that, at fifteen, they were all softness and sweetness. The
present

present æra, however, my dear young friend, is highly favourable to all you can judiciously wish; namely, the entire re-establishment, or total destruction of all confidence.—To a man of your nice feelings, there is no medium. Your love demands respect, or your tranquillity exacts flight from its object. Set apart your offence at the cultivation of an acquaintance you disapprove; be yourself of the party to Southampton, and there, a very little observation will enable you to dive into the most secret recesses of her character.”

“ Steadiness, Doctor, I do not want, nor yet, however I suffer from its exertion, fortitude: but a plan such as this, requires something more; it calls for an equivocal conduct, which, to me, would be impracticable, and to her, might prove delusive. No!—the openness I so much pine to meet with, I must, at least, not forfeit myself.”

“ The fervour of your integrity, my dear Mandlebert, mistakes caution for deceit. If, indeed, this plan had any other view than your union, it would not merely be cruel, but infamous: the truth, however, is, you must either pursue her upon proof, or abandon her at once, with every chance of repenting such a measure.”

“ Alas! how torturing is hesitation! to believe myself the object of her regard—to think that first of all human felicities mine, yet to find it so pliant—so precarious—to see her, with such thoughtless readiness, upon the point of falling into the hands of another!—receiving—answering—his letters!—letters too so confident, so daring! made up of insolent demands and imperious reproaches—to meet him by his own appointment—O, Dr. Marchmont! all delicious as is the idea of her preference—all entwined as she is around my soul, how, now, how ever again, can I be happy, either to quit—or to claim her?—”

“ This division of sentiment is what gives rise to my plan. At Southampton, you will see if Sir Sedley pursues her; and, as she will be uncertain of your intentions,

intentions, you will be enabled to judge the singleness of her mind, and the stability of her affection by the reception she gives him."

"But if—as I think I can gather from her delivering me his letters, the affair, whatever it has been, with Sir Sedley, is over.—What then?"

"You will have leisure to discuss it; and opportunity, also, to see her with other Sir Sedleys. Public places abound with those flutterers after youth and beauty; unmeaning admirers, who sigh at every new face; or black traitors to society, who seek but to try, and try but to publish their own power of conquest."

"Will you, then, my dear Doctor, be also of the party? for my sake, will you, once more, quit your studies and repose, to give me, upon the spot, your counsel, according to the varying exigence of varying circumstances? to aid me to prepare and compose my mind for whatever may be the event, and to guide even, if possible, my wavering and distracted thoughts."

To the importance of the period, and to a plea so serious, every obstacle yielded, and Dr. Marchmont agreed to accompany him to Southampton.

C H A P. XXXIX.

Live and Learn.

BEFORE the Cleves party assembled to breakfast, after the various arrangements made for Southampton, Mr. Dubster arrived, and demanded an interview with Sir Hugh, who, attending him to the drawing-room, asked his pleasure.

"Why, have you not read the young gentleman's letter,

letter, sir?" cried he, surprised, "because he said, he'd put it all down, clear as a pike staff, to save time."

Sir Hugh had not heard of it."

"Why, then, if you please, sir, we'll go and ask that elderly gentlewoman, what she's done with it. She might as well have shewed it, after the young gentleman's taking the trouble to write it to her. But she is none of the good natureddest I take it."

Repairing, then, to Miss Margland, after his usual bows to all the company, "I ask pardon, ma'am," he cried; "but pray, what's the reason of your keeping the young gentleman's letter to yourself, which was writ o'purpose to let the old gentleman know what I come for?"

"Because I never trouble myself with any thing that's impertinent;" she haughtily answered: though, in fact, when the family had retired, she had stolen down stairs, and read the letter; which contained a warm recommendation of Mr. Dubster to her favour, with abundant flippant offers to promote her own interest for so desirable a match, should Camilla prove blind to its advantages. This she had then burnt, with a determination never to acknowledge her condescension in opening it.

The repeated calls of Mr. Dubster procuring no further satisfaction; "Why, then, I don't see," he said, "but what I'm as bad off, as if the young gentleman had not writ the letter, for I've got to speak for myself at last."

Taking Sir Hugh, then, by a button of his coat, he desired he would go back with him to the other parlour: and there, with much circumlocution, and unqualified declarations of his having given over all thoughts of further marrying, till the young gentleman overpersuaded him of his being particular agreeable to the young lady, he solemnly proposed himself for Miss Camilla Tyrold.

Sir Hugh, who perceived in this address nothing that was ridiculous, was somewhat drawn from reflecting on his own disappointment, by the pity he conceived

ceived for this hopeless suitor, to whom, with equal circumlocution of concern, he communicated, that his niece was on the point of marriage with a neighbour.

"I know that," replied Mr. Dubster, nodding sagaciously, "the young gentleman having told me of the young baronight; but he said, it was all against her will, being only your over teasing, and the like."

"The Lord be good unto me!" exclaimed the baronet, holding up his hands; "if I don't think all the young boys have a mind to drive me out of my wits, one after t'other."

Hurrying, then, back to the breakfast parlour, and to Camilla, "Come hither, my dear," he cried, "for here's a gentleman come to make his addressee to you, that won't take an answer."

Every serious thought, and every melancholy apprehension in Camilla gave place, at this speech, to the ludicrous machinations of Lionel. She took Sir Hugh by the hand, and, drawing him away to the most distant window, said, in a low voice "My dear uncle, this is a mere trick of Lionel; the person you see here is, I believe, a tinker."

"A tinker!" repeated Sir Hugh, quite loud, in defiance of the signs and hints! hints! of Camilla, "good luck! that's a person I should never have thought of!" Then walking up to Mr. Dubster, who was taking into his hands all the ornaments from the chimney-piece, one by one, to examine, "Sir," he said, "you may be a very good sort of man, and I don't doubt but you are, for I've a proper respect for every trade in its way; but in point of marrying my niece, it's a thing I must beg you to put out of your head; it not being a proper subject to talk of to a young lady, from a person in that line."

"Very well, sir," answered Mr. Dubster, stiffly, and pouting, "it's not of much consequence; don't make yourself uneasy. There's nothing in what I was going to propose but what was quite genteel. I'd scorn to address a lady else. She'd have a good five hundred a-year, in case of outliving me."

"Good luck! five hundred a year! who'd have thought of such a thing by the tinkering business?"

"The what business, did you say, sir?" cried Mr. Dubster, strutting up to the baronet, with a solemn frown.

"The tinkering business, my good friend. An't you a tinker?"

"Sir!" cried Mr. Dubster, swelling, "I did not think, when I was coming to make such a handsome offer, of being affronted at such a rate as this. Not that I mind it. It's not worth fretting about. However, as to a tinker, I'm no more a tinker than yourself, whatever put it in your head."

"Good luck, my dear," cried the baronet, to Camilla, "the gentleman quite denies it."

Camilla, though unable to refrain from laughing, confessed she had received the information from Mrs. Arlbery at the Northwick breakfast, who, she now supposed, had said it in random sport.

Sir Hugh cordially begged his pardon, and asked him to take a seat at the breakfast table, to soften the undesigned offence.

A note now arrived from Mr. Tyrold to the baronet. It contained his consent to return, with Lavinia, to Cleves, and his ready acquiescence in the little excursion to Southampton, since Miss Margland would be superintendant of the party; "and since," he added, "they will have another guardian, to whom already I consign my Camilla, and, upon her account, my dear Eugenia also, with the same fearless confidence I should feel in seeing them again under the maternal wing."

Sir Hugh, who always read his letters aloud, said, when he had done: "See what it is to be a good boy! my brother looks upon young Mr. Edgar as these young girls' husband already; that is, of one of them; by which means the other becomes his sister; which, I'm sure, is a trouble he won't mind, except as a pleasure."

Camilla's distress at this speech passed unnoticed, from the abrupt entrance of Lynmere, giving orders aloud to his servant to get ready for Southampton.

Inflamed

Inflamed with triumph in his recent success in baffling his uncle, that youth was in the most turbulent spirits, and fixed a resolution either to lord it over the whole house, or regain at once his liberty for returning to the Continent.

Forcing a chair between Sir Hugh and Camilla, he seized rapidly whatever looked most inviting from every plate on the table, to place upon his own, murmuring the whole time against the horses, declaring the stud the most wretched he had ever seen, and protesting the old groom must be turned away without loss of time.

"What, Jacob?" cried the baronet; "why, nephew, he has lived with me from a boy: and now he's grown old, I'd sooner rub down every horse with my own hand, than part with him."

"He must certainly go, sir. There's no keeping him. I may be tempted else to knock his brains out some day. Besides, I have a very good fellow I can recommend to you of my own."

"Clermont, I've no doubt of his being a good fellow, which I'm very glad of; but as to your always knocking out the brains of my servants, it's a thing I must beg you not to talk of any more, being against the law. Besides which, it don't sound very kind of you, considering their having done you no harm; never having seen your face, as one may say, except just to wait upon you; which can hardly be reckoned a bad office; besides a servant's being a man, as well as you; whether Homer and Horace tell you so or no."

To see Sir Hugh displeased, was a sight new to the whole house. Camilla and Eugenia, mutually pained for him, endeavoured, by various little kind offices, to divert his attention; but Indiana thought his displeasure proved her brother to be a wit; and Clermont rose in spirits and in insolence upon the same idea: too shallow to know, that of all the qualities with which the perversity of human nature is gifted, the power which is the most common to attain, and the most easy to practise, is the art of provoking.

Jacob now appearing, Lynmere ordered some shrimps.

There were none,

"No shrimps? There's nothing to be had! 'Tis a wretched county this!"

"You'll get nice shrimps at Southampton, sir, by what I can hear," said Mr. Dubster. "Tom Hicks says he has been sick with 'em many a day, he's eat such a heap. They gets 'em by hundreds, and hundreds, and hundreds at a time."

"Pray, nephew how long shall you stay? because of my nieces coming back at the same time."

"A fortnight's enough to tire me any where, sir. Pray what do you all do with yourselves here after breakfast? What's your mode?"

"Mode, nephew? we've got no particular mode that ever I heard of. However, among so many of us, I think it's a little hard, if you can find nothing to say to us; all in a manner, your relations too."

"We take no notice of relations now, sir; that's out."

"I'm sorry for it, nephew, for a relation's a relation, whether you take notice of him or not. And there's ne'er an ode in Virgil will tell you to the contrary, as I believe."

A short silence now ensued, which was broken by a sigh from Sir Hugh, who ejaculated to himself, though aloud, "I can't but think what my poor friend Westwyn will do, if his son's came home in this manner! caring for nobody, but an oyster, or a shrimp;—unless it's a newspaper!"

"And what should a man care for else, my good old friend, in a desert place such as this?"

"Good old friend!" repeated the baronet; "to be sure, I'm not very young.—However, as to that—but you mean no harm, I know, for which reason I can't be so ill-natured as to take it ill. However, if poor Westwyn is served in this way—He's my dearest friend that I've got, out of us all here, of my own kin, and he's got only one son, and he sent him to foreign parts only for cheapness; and if he should happen

happen to like nothing he can get at home, it won't answer much in saving, to send out for things all day long."

"O don't be troubled, sir; Westwyn's but a poor creature. He'll take up with any thing. He live within his allowance the whole time. A mighty poor creature."

"I'm glad of it! glad of it indeed!" cried Sir Hugh, with involuntary eagerness; "I should have been sorry if my poor good old friend had had such disappointment."

"Upon my honour," cried Lynmere, piqued, "the quoz of the present season are beyond what a man could have hoped to see!"

"Quoz! what's quoz, nephew?"

"Why, it's a thing there's no explaining to you sort of gentlemen; and sometimes we say quiz, my good old sir."

Sir Hugh, now, for almost the first time in his life, felt seriously affronted. His utmost lenity could not palliate the wilful disrespect of this language; and, with a look of grave displeasure, he answered, "Really, nephew, I can't but say, I think you've got rather a particular odd way of speaking to persons. As to talking so much about people's being old, you'd do well to consider that's no fault in any body; except one's years, which is what we can't be said to help."

"You descant too much upon words, sir; we have left off, now, using them with such prodigious precision. It's quite over, sir."

"O, my dear Clermont!" cried Sir Hugh, losing his short movement of anger in a more tender sensation of concern, "how it goes to my heart to see you turn out such a jackanapes!"

Lynmere, resentfully hanging back, said no more; and Mr. Dubster, having drunk seven dishes of tea, with a long apology between each for the trouble, gladly seized the moment of pause, to ask Camilla when she had heard from *their friend Mrs. Mittin*, adding, "I should have brought you a letter from her, ma'am, myself, but that I was rather out of sorts with

with her ; for happening to meet her, the day as you went, walking on them Pantiles, with some of her quality binding, when I was not dressed out quite in my best becomes, she made as if she did not know me. Not as it signifies. It's pretty much of a muchness to me. I remember her another sort of person to what she looks now, before I was a gentleman myself."

"Why, pray, what was you then, sir?" cried Sir Hugh, with great simplicity.

"As to that, sir, there's no need to say whether I was one thing or another, as I know of ; I'm not in the least ashamed of what I was."

Sir Hugh seeing him offended, was beginning an apology ; but, interrupting him, "No, sir," he said, "there's no need to say nothing about it. It's not a thing to take much to heart. I've been defamed often enough, I hope, to be above minding it. Only just this one thing, sir ; I beg I may have the favour to be introduced to that lady as had the obligingness to call me a tinker, when I never was no such thing."

Breakfast now being done, the ladies retired to prepare for their journey.

"Well," cried Mr. Dubster, looking after Eugénie, "that little lady will make no great figure at such a place as Southton. I would not have her look out for a husband there."

"She'd have been just the thing for me!" cried Lynmore, haughtily rising, and conceitedly parading his fine form up and down the room ; his eyes catching it from looking-glass, to looking glass, by every possible contrivance ; "just the thing matched to perfection!"

"Lord help me ! if I don't find myself in the dark about every thing" cried Sir Hugh ; "who'd have thought of you scholars thinking so much of beauty ; I should be glad to know what your classics say to that point?"

"Faith, my good sir, I never trouble myself to ask. From the time we begin our tours, we wipe away all that stuff as fast as possible from our thoughts."

"Why, pray, nephew, what harm could it do to your tours?"

"We

"We want room, sir, room in the pericranium ! As soon as we being to travel, we give up every thing to taste. And then we want clear heads. Clear heads, sir, for pictures, statues, busts, alto relievos, basso relievos, tablets, monuments, mausoleums"—

"If you go on at that rate, nephew," interrupted Sir Hugh, holding his ears, "you'll put my poor head quite into a whirligig. And it's none of the deepest already, Lord help me !"

Lynmere now, without ceremony, made off ; and Mr. Dubster, left alone with the baronet, said they might as well proceed to business. "So pray, sir, if I may make bold, in the case we come to a right understanding about the young lady, what do you propose to give her down ?"

Sir Hugh, staring, inquired what he meant.

"Why, I mean, sir, what shall you give her at the first ? I know she's to have it all at your demise ; but that i'n't the bird in the hand. Now, when once I know that, I can make my offers, which shall be handsome or not, according. And that's but fair. So how much can you part with, sir ?"

"Not a Guinea !" cried Sir Hugh, with some emotion ; "I can't give her any thing ! Mr. Edgar knows that."

"That's hard, indeed, sir. What nothing for a setting out ? And, pray, sir, what may the sum total be upon your demise ?"

"Not a penny !" cried Sir Hugh, - with still more agitation : "Don't you know I've disinherited her ?"

"Disinherited her ? why this is bad news enough ! And pray, sir, what for ?"

"Nothing ! She never offended me in thought, word, nor deed, !

"Well, that's odd enough. And when did you do it, sir ?"

"The very week she was nine years old, poor thing ! which I shall never forget as long as I live, being my worst action."

"Well, this is particular enough ! And young Squire Tyrold's never heard a word of it : which is somewhat of a wonder too."

"Not

"Not heard of it? why the whole family know it! I've settled every thing I was worth in the world upon her younger sister, that you saw sitting by her."

"Well, if Tom Hicks did not as good as tell me so ever so long ago, though the young 'squire said it was all to the contrary: what for, I don't know; unless to take me in. But he won't find that quite so easy, asking his pardon. Matrimony's a good thing enough, when it's to help a man forward: but a person must be a fool indeed, to put himself out of his way for nothing."

He then formally wished the baronet a good day, and hastened from the house, puffed up with vain glory, at his own sagacious precautions, which had thus happily saved him from being tricked into unprofitable wedlock.

Mrs. Bertinton now arrived, and as Camilla was ready, though trembling, doubtful, apprehensive of the step she was taking, declined alighting. A general meeting was to take place at the inn: and the baronet, putting a twenty pound note into her hand, with the most tender blessings parted with his darling niece. And then, surprised at not seeing Edgar to breakfast, sent his butler to tell him the history of the excursion.

Lynmere was already set off on horseback: and the party, consisting of Dr. Orkborne, Miss Margland, Indiana, and Eugenia, followed two hours after, in the coach of the baronet, which drove from the park as the chaise entered it with Mr. Tyrold and Lavinia, to supply their places.

C H A P. XXXIX.

A Way to make friends.

WHEN Camilla appeared at the halldoor, a gentleman descended from the carriage of Mrs. Berlington, with an air the most melancholy, and eyes bent to the earth, in the mournful bow with which he offered her his hand: though, when he had assisted her into the coach, he raised them, and, turning round, cast upon the mansion a look of desponding fondness, that immediately brought to her recollection young Melmond, the Oxford student, and the brother of her new friend.

Mrs. Berlington received her with tenderress, folding her to her breast, and declaring life to be now insupportable without her.

The affection of Camilla was nearly reciprocal, but her pleasure had no chance of equal participation; nor was the suspensive state of her mind the only impediment; opposite to her in the carriage, and immediately claiming her attention, was Mrs. Martin.

The agitative events which had filled up the short interval of her residence at Cleves, had so completely occupied every faculty, that, till the affair of the horse involved her in new difficulties, her debts had entirely flown her remembrance; and the distressing scenes which immediately succeeded to that forced recollection, made its duration as short as it was irksome; but the sight of Mrs. Martin brought it back with violence to her memory, and flashed it, with shame, upon her conscience.

The twenty pounds, however, just given her by Sir Hugh, occurred at the same moment to her thoughts; and she determined to repair her negligence, by appropriating it into parcels for the payment of all she owed, before she suffered sleep again to close her eyes.

Mrs. Berlington informed her, that both herself and

her brother had been summoned to Southampton to meet Mrs. Edon, the aunt by whom she had been educated, who had just arrived there from Wales, upon some secret business, necessary for her to hear, but which could not be revealed by letters.

The journey, though in itself short and pleasant, proved to Camilla long and wearisome; the beauties of the prospect were acknowledged by her eye, but her mind, dead to pleasure, refused to give them their merited effect. To the charms of nature she could not be blind; her fervent imagination, and the lessons of her youth, combined to do them justice; but she thought not of them at this moment; hill, vale, or plain, were uninteresting, however beautiful; it was Edgar she looked for; Edgar, who thus coldly had suffered her to depart, but who still, it was possible, might pursue; and hope, ever active, painted him, as she proceeded, in every distant object that caught her eye, whether living or inanimate, brightening, from time to time, the roses of her cheeks with the felicity of a speedy reconciliation; but upon every near approach, the flattering error was detected, and neither hill, vale, nor plain, could dispel the disappointment. A fine country, and diversified views, may soften even the keenest affliction of decided misfortune, and tranquilise the most gloomy sadness into resignation and composure; but suspense rejects the gentle palliative; 'tis an absorbent of the faculties that suffers them to see, hear, and feel only its own perplexity; and the finer the fibres of the sensibility on which it seizes, the more exclusive is its depotism; doubt, in a fervent mind, from the rapidity of its evolutions between fear in its utmost dependence, and hope in its fullest rapture, is little short of torture.

They drove immediately to an elegant house, situated upon a small eminence, half a mile without the town of Southampton, which had already been secured; and Mrs. Berlinton, as soon as she had chosen the pleasantest apartment it afforded for Camilla, and suffered Mrs. Mitton to choose the next pleasant for herself, went, accompanied by her brother, to the lodging of Mrs. Edon.

Left

Left alone, Camilla stationed herself down, at a window, believing she meant to look at the prospect ; but her eye, faithful to her heart, roved up and down the high road, and took in only chaises or horsemen, till Mrs. Mittin, with her customary familiarity, came into the room. " Well my dear miss," she cried, " you're welcome to Southampton, and welcome to Mrs. Berlington, she's a nice lady as ever I knew ; I suppose you're surpris'd to see us so great together ? but I'll tell you how it came about. You must know, just as you was gone, I happened to be in the book shop when she came in, and asked for a book ; the Peruvian Letters she called it ; and it was not at home, and she looked quite vexed, for she said she had looked the catalogue up and down and saw nothing else she'd a mind to ; so I thought it would be a good opportunity to oblige her, and be a way to make a prodigious genteel acquaintance besides ; so I took down the name, and I found out the lady that had got the book, and I made her a visit, and I told her it was particular wanted by a lady that had a reason ; so she let me have it, and I took it to my pretty lady, who was so pleas'd, she did not know how to thank me : So this got me footing in the house ; and there I heard, amongst her people, she was coming to Southampton, and was to call for you, my dear miss ; so when I found she had not her coach full, I ask'd her to give me a cast ; for I told her you'd be particular glad to see me, as we'd some business to settle together, that was a secret between only us two ; so she said she would do any thing to give you pleasure ; so then I made free to ask her to give me a night's lodging, till I could find out some friend to be at ; for I'd a vast mind to come to Southampton, as I could do it so reasonable, for I like to go every where. And I dare say, my dear miss, if you'll tell her 'twill oblige you, she'll make me the compliment to let me stay all the time, for I know nobody here ; though I don't fear making friends, go where I will. And you know, my dear miss, you can do no less by me, considering what I've done for you ; for I've kept all the good people quiet about your debts ; and they say you may pay

pay them when you will, as I told them you was such a rich heiress ; which Mr Dubster let me into the secret of, for he had had it from your brother."

Camilla now experienced the extremest repentance and shame, to find herself involved in any obligation with a character so forward, vulgar, and encroaching, and to impose such a person, through the abuse of her name and influence, upon the time and patience of Mrs. Berlinton.

The report spread by Lionel she immediately disavowed, and, producing her twenty pound bank note begged Mrs. Mittin would have the goodness to get it changed for her, and to discharge her accounts without delay.

Surprised by this readiness; and struck by the view, of the note, Mrs. Mittin imputed to mere reserve the denial of her expected wealth, but readily promised to get in the bills, and see her clear.

Camilla would now have been left alone ; but Mrs Mittin thought of nothing less than quitting her, and she knew not how to bid her depart. It was uncertain when Mrs. Berlinton could return ; to obviate, therefore, in some measure, the fatigue of such conversation, Camilla proposed walking.

It was still but two o'clock, and the weather was delicious ; every place that opened to any view, presented some prospect that was alluring ; Camilla, notwithstanding her anxiety, was caught, and at intervals, at least, forgot all within, from admiration of all without.

Mrs. Mittin led immediately to the town, and Camilla was struck with its neatness, and surprised by its populousness. Mrs. Mittin assured her it was nothing to London, and only wished she could walk her from Charing-cross to Temple bar, just to shew her what it was to see a little of the world.

" But now, my dear," she cried, " the thing is to find out what we've got to look at ; so don't let's go on without knowing what we're about ; however, these shops are all so monstrous smart, 'twill be a pleasure to go into them, and ask the good people what there's to see in the town."

This

This pretext proved so fertile to her of entertainment, in the opportunity it afforded of taking a near view of the various commodities exposed to sale, that while she entered almost every shop, with enquiries of what was worth seeing, she attended to no answer nor information, but having examined and admired all the goods within sight or reach, walked off, to obtain, by similar means, a similar privilege further on ; boasting to Camilla that, by this clever device they might see all that was smartest, without the expence of buying anything.

It is possible that this might safely have been repeated, from one end of the town to the other, had Mrs. Mittin been alone ; and she seemed well disposed to make the experiment ; but Camilla, who absent and absorbed, accompanied without heeding her, was of a figure and appearance not quite so well adapted for indulging with impunity such unbridled curiosity. The shopkeepers, who according to their several tastes or opinions, gave their directions to the churches, the quays, the market-place, the antique gates, the townhall, &c. involuntarily looked at her as they answered the questioner, and not satisfied with the short view, followed to the door, to look again ; this presently produced an effect ; that, for the whole length of the High-street, was amply ridiculous ; every one perceiving that, whatsoever had been his recommendation, whether to the right, to the left, or straight forward, the two inquirers went no further than into the next shop, whence they regularly drew forth either the master or the man to make another stare at their singular proceeding.

Some supposed they were only seeking to attract notice ; others thought they were deranged in mind ; and others, again, imagined they were shoplifters, and hastened back to their counters, to examine what was missing of their goods.

Two men of the two last persuasions communicated to one another their opinions, each sustaining his own with a positiveness that would have ended in a quarrel, had it not been accommodated by a wager. To
settle

settle this became now so important, that business gave way to speculation, and the contending parties, accompanied by a young perfumer as arbitrator, leaving their affairs in the hands of their wives, or their domestics, issued forth from their repositories, to pursue and watch the curious travellers; laying bets by the way at almost every shop as they proceeded, till they reached the quay, where the ladies made a full stand, and their followers opened a consultation how best to decide the contest.

Mr. Firl, a sagacious old linen-draper, who concluded them to be shoplifters, declared he would keep aloof, for he should detect them best when they least suspected they were observed.

Mr. Drim, a genteel and simple haberdasher, who believed their senses disordered, made a circuit to face and examine them, frequently however, looking back to see that no absconding trick was played him by his friends. When he came up to them, the pensive and absorbed look of Camilla struck him as too particular to be natural; and in Mrs. Mittin he immediately fancied he perceived something wild, if not insane. In truth, an opinion preconceived of her derangement might easily authorise strong suspicions of confirmation, from the contented volubility with which she incessantly ran on, without waiting for answerers, or even listeners; and his observation had not taught him, that the loquacious desire only to speak. They exact time, not attention.

Mrs. Mittin, soon observing the curiosity with which he examined them, looked at him so hard in return, talking the whole time, in a quick low voice, to Camilla upon his oddity, that, struck with a direful panic, in the persuasion she was marking him for some mischief, he he turned short about to get back to his companions; leaving Mrs. Mittin with precisely the same opinion of himself which he had imbibed of her.

"Well, my dear," cried she, "this is one of the most miraculous adventures I've met with yet; as sure as you're alive that man that stares so is not right in the head! for else what should he run away for, all in such a hurry,

a hurry, after looking at us so particular for nothing ? I'll assure you, I think the best thing we can do, is to get off as fast as we can, for fear of the worst."

They then spread their way from the quay ; but, in turning down the first passage to get out of sight, they were led into one of the little rooms prepared for the accommodation of bathers.

This seemed so secure, as well as pleasant, that Camilla, soothed by the tranquillity with which she could contemplate the noble Southampton water and its fine banks, sat down at the window, and desired not to walk any further.

The fright with which Mr. Drim had retreated, gained no proselyte to his opinion ; Mr. Girt, the perfumer, asserted, significantly, they were only idle travellers, of light character ; and Mr. Firl, when in dodging them, he saw they went into a bathing toom, offered to double his wager that it was to make some assortment of their spoil.

This was accepted, and it was agreed that one should saunter in the adjoining passages to see which way they turned upon coming out, while the two others should patrol the beach, to watch their disappearance from the windows.

Mrs. Mittin, meanwhile, was as much amused, though with different objects, as Camilla. A large mixt party of ladies and gentlemen, who had ordered a vessel for sailing down the water, which was not yet ready, now made their appearance ; and their dress, their air of enjoyment, their outcries of impatience, the frisky gaiety of some, the noisy merriment of others, seemed to Mrs. Mittin marks of so much grandeur and happiness, that all her thoughts were at work to devise some contrivance for becoming of their acquaintance.

Camilla also surveyed, but almost without seeing them ; for the only image of her mind now unexpectedly met her view ; Dr. Marchmont and Edgar, just arrived, had patrolled to the beach, where Edgar, whose eye, from his eagerness, appeared to be every where in a moment, immediately perceived her ; they
both

both bowed, and Dr. Marchmont, amazed by the air and figure of her companion, inquired if Mrs. Berlington had any particularly vulgar relation to whom she was likely to commit her fair guest.

Edgar, who had seen only herself, could not now forbear another glance; but the aspect of Mrs. Mittin, without Mrs. Berlington, or any other more dignified or fitting protectress, was both unaccountable and unpleasant to him; he recollected having seen her at Tunbridge, where the careless temper, and negligent manners of Mrs. Arlbery, made all approaches easy, that answered any purpose of amusement or ridicule; but he could not conceive how Mrs. Berlington, or Camilla herself, could be joined by such a companion.

Mr. Firl, having remarked these two gentlemen's bows, began to fear for his wager; yet thinking it authorised him to seek some information, approached them, and taking off his hat, said: "You seem to be noticing those two ladies up there; pay, gentlemen, if you've no objection, who may they be?"

"Why do you ask, Sir?" cried Edgar, sternly.

"Why, we've a wager depending upon them, sir, and I believe there's no gentleman will refuse to help another about a wager."

"A wager?" repeated Edgar, wishing, but vainly, to manifest no curiosity; "what inducement could you have to lay a wager about them?"

"Why, I believe, sir, there's nobody's a better judge than me what I've laid about; though I may be out, to be sure, if you know the ladies; but I've seen so much of their tricks, in my time, that they must be pretty sharp before they'll over-reach me."

"What tricks? who must be sharp? who are you taking of?"

"Shoplifters, sir."

"Shoplifters! what do you mean?"

"No harm, sir; I may be out, to be sure, as I say; and if so, I ask pardon; only, as we've laid the wager, I think I may speak before I pay."

The curiosity of Edgar would have been converted into ridicule, had he been less uneasy
at

at seeing with whom Camilla was thus associated; Mrs. Mittin might certainly be a worthy woman, and, if so, must merit every kindness that could be shewn her; but her air and manner so strongly displayed the low bred society to which she had been accustomed, that he foresaw nothing but improper acquaintance, or demeaning adventures, that could ensue from such a connection at a public place.

Dr. Marchmont demanded what had given rise to this suspicion.

Mr. Firl answered, that they had been into every shop in the town, routing over every body's best goods, yet not laying out a penny.

Nothing of this could Edgar comprehend, except that Camilla had suffered herself to be led about by Mrs. Mittin, entirely at her pleasure; but all further inquiry was stopt, by the voluntary and pert junction of Girt, the young perfumer, who, during this period, had by no means been idle; for perceiving, in the group waiting for a vessel, a certain customer by whom he knew such a subject would be well received, he contrived to excite his curiosity to ask some questions, which could only be satisfied by the history of the wager, and his own opinion that both parties were out.

This drew all eyes to the bathing room; and new bets soon were circulated, consisting of every description of conjecture, or even possibility, except that the two objects in question were innocent: and for that, in a set of fourteen, one only was found who defended Camilla, though her face seemed the very index of purity, which still more strongly was painted upon it than beauty, or even than youth. Such is the prevalent disposition to believe in general depravity, that while those who are debased themselves find a consolation in thinking others equally worthless, those even who are of a better sort, nourish a secret vanity in supposing few as good as themselves; and fully, without reflection, the fair candour of their minds, by aiding that insidious degeneracy, which robs the community of all confidence in virtue.

The approach of the perfumer to Edgar had all the hardness of vulgar elation, bestowed, at this moment,

by

by the recent encouragement of having been permitted to propagate his facetious opinions in a society of gentlemen; for though to one only amongst them, a young man of large fortune, by whom he was particularly patronised, he had presumed verbally to address himself, he had yet the pleasure to hear his account repeated from one to another, till not a person of the company escaped hearing it.

"My friend Firl's been telling you, I suppose, sir," said he, to Edgar, "of his foolish wager? but, take my word for it—"

Here Edgar, who again had irresistibly looked up at the room, saw that three gentlemen had entered it; alarmed lest these surmises should be productive of impertinence to Camilla, he darted quick from the beach to her immediate protection.

But the rapidity of his wishes were ill seconded by the uncertainty of his footsteps; and while, with eyes eagerly wandering all around, he hastily pushed forward, he was stopt by Mr. Drim, who told him to take care how he went on, for, in one of those bathing-houses, to the best of his belief, there were two crazy women, one melancholy, and one stark wild, that had just, as he supposed, escaped from their keepers.

"How shall I find my way, then, to another of the bathing houses?" cried Edgar.

Mr. Drim undertook to shew him where he might turn, but said he must not lose sight of the door, because he had a bottle of port depending upon it; his neighbour, Mr. Firl, insisting they were only shop-lifters.

Edgar here stopt short and stared.

Drim then assured him it was what he could not believe, as nothing was missing; though Mr. Firl would have it that it was days and days, sometimes, before people found out what was gone; but he was sure, himself, they were touched in the head, by their going about so wild, asking every body the same questions, and minding nobody's answers.

Edgar, convinced now Camilla was here again implicated, broke with disgust from the man, and rushed to the door he charged him to avoid.

CHAP. XL.

A Rage of Obliging.

CAMILLA, from the instant she had perceived Edgar, had been in the utinost emotion, from doubt if his journey were to seek a reconciliation, or only to return her letters, and take a lasting farewell. Her first feeling at his sight urged her to retire : but something of a softer nature speedily interfered, representing, if now he should join her, what suffering might mutually be saved by an immediate conference. She kept, therefore her seat, looking steadily straight down the water, and denying herself one moment's glance at any thing, or person, upon the beach : little imagining she ingrossed, herself, the attention of all who paraded it. But, when the insinuations of the slippant perfumer had once made her looked at, her beauty, her apparently unprotected situation, and the account of the wager, seemed to render her an object to be stared at without scruple.

Mrs. Mittin saw how much they were observed, but Camilla, unheeding her remarks, listened only to hear if any footsteps approached ; but when, at last, some struck her ears, they were accompanied by an unknown voice, so loud and clamorously jovial, that, disturbed, she looked round—and saw the door violently flung open, and three persons, dressed like gentlemen, force their way into the small dwelling place.

Mr. Halder, the leader of this triumvirate, was the particular patron of Girt, the young perfumer ; and, though his superior in birth and riches, was scarcely upon a par with him, from wilful neglect in education ; and undoubtedly beneath him in decency and conduct, notwithstanding young Girt piqued himself far less upon such sentimental qualifications, than upon his

his skill in cosmetics, and had less respect for unadulterated morals, than unadulterated powder.

The second who entered, was, in every particular, still less defensible: he was a peer of the realm; he had a daughter married, and his age entitled him to be the grandfather of young Halder. In point of fortune, speculatists deemed them equal; for though the estate of Halder was as yet unincumbered with the mortgages that hung upon that of Lord Valhurst, they computed, with great exactness, the term of its superiority, since already he had insisted in the jockey-meetings, and belonged to the gaming clubs.

The third, a young man of a serious, but pleasing demeanour, was rather an attendant than a partner in this intrusion. He was the only one of the whole party to whom the countenance of Camilla had announced innocence; and when Halder, instigated by the assertions of the facetious Girt, proposed the present measure, and Lord Valhurst, caught by the youthful beauty of the fair subject of discussion, acceded, this single champion stood forth, and modestly, yet firmly, declaring his opinion they were mistaken, accompanied them with a view to protect her if he himself were right.

Boisterously entering, Halder addressed at once to Camilla, such unceremonious praise of her beauty, that, affrighted and offended, she hastily seized the arm of Mrs. Mittin, and, in a voice of alarm, though with an air of command that admitted no doubt of her seriousness, and no appeal from her resolution, said, "Let us go home, Mrs. Mittin, immediately."

Simple as were these words, their manner had an effect upon Halder to awe and distance him. Beauty, in the garb of virtue, is rather formidable than attractive to those who are natively unenlightened, as well as habitually degenerate: though, over such as have ever known better sentiments, it frequently retains its primeval power, even in their darkest declension of depravity.

But while Halder, repulsed, stood back, and the young champion, with an air the most respectful, made way

way for her to pass; Lord Valhurst, shutting the door, planted himself against it.

Seeing terror now take possession of every feature of her face, her determined protector called out: "Make way, my Lord, I beg!" and offered her his hand. But Camilla, equally frightened at them all, shrunk appalled from his assistance, and turned towards the window, with an intention of demanding help from Edgar, whom she supposed still on the beach; but the peer, slowly moving from the door, said he was the last to mean to disconcert the young lady, and only wished to stop her till he could call for his carriage, that he might see her safe wherever she wished to go.

Camilla had no doubt of the sincerity of this proposal, but would accept no aid from a stranger, even though an old man, while she hoped to obtain that of Edgar. Edgar, however she saw not, and fear is, generally precipitate: she concluded him gone; concluded herself deserted, and, from knowing neither, equally fearing both the young men, inclined towards Lord Valhurst; who, with delighted surprise, was going to take her under his care, when Edgar rushed forward.

The pleasure that darted into her eyes announced his welcome. Halder, from his reception, thought the enigma of his own ill success solved; the other youth, supposing him her brother, no longer sought to interfere; but Lord Valhurst exhibited signs of such irrepressible mortification, that inexperience itself could not mistake the dishonourable views of his offered services, since, to see her in safety, was so evidently not their purpose. Camilla, looking at him with the horror he so justly excited, gave her hand to Edgar, who had instantly claimed it, and, without one word being uttered by either, hastily walked away with him, nimbly accompanied by Mrs. Mittin.

The young man, whose own mind was sufficiently pure to make him give easy credit to the purity of another, was shocked at his undeserved implication in so gross an attack, and at his failure of manifesting the laudable motive which had made him one of the triumvirate; and, looking after her with mingled admiration

miration and concern, "Indeed, gentlemen," he cried, "You have been much to blame. You have affronted a young lady who carries in the whole of her appearance the marks of meriting respect."

The sensibility of Lord Valhurst was not of sufficient magnitude to separate into two courses: the little he possessed was already occupied by his disappointment, in losing the beautiful prey he believed just falling into his hands, and he had no emotion, therefore, to bestow upon his young reprover. But Halder, who, to want of feeling, added want of sense, roared out, with rude railery, a gross, which he thought witty, attack both of the defender and the defended.

The young man, with the proud probity of unhackneyed sentiment, made a vindication of his uncorrupt intentions; which produced but louder mirth, and coarser incredulity. The contest, however, was wholly unequal; one had nerves of the most irritable delicacy; the other had never yet, by any sensation, nor any accident, been admonished that nerves made any part of the human composition: in proportion, therefore, as one became more offended, the other grew more callous, till the chivalry of indignant honour, casting prudence, safety, and forbearance away, dictated a hasty challenge, which was accepted with a horse laugh of brutal senselessness of danger. Courage is of another description. It risks life with heroism; but it is only to preserve or pursue something, without which the charm of life were dissolved: it meets death with steadiness; but it prepares for immortality with reverence and emotion.

* * * *

Edgar and Camilla continued their walk in a silence painful to both, but which neither knew how first to break; each wished with earnestness an opening to communication and confidence but, mutually shocked by the recent adventure, Edgar waited the absence of Mrs. Mittin, to point out the impropriety and

and insufficiency of such a guard ; and Camilla, still aghast with terror, had no power of any sort to begin a discourse.

Their taciturnity, if not well supplied, was, at least, well contrasted by the volubility of Mrs. Mittin, which, as in the bathing house it had been incessant, in declaring to the three intruders, that both she and the other young lady were persons of honour, was now no less unremitting in boasting how well she had checked and kept them in order.

The horror of the attack she had just escaped became soon but a secondary suffering to Camilla, though, at the moment, it had impressed her more terribly than any actual event of her life, or any scene her creative imagination had ever painted ; yet, however dreadful, it was now past ; but who could tell the end of what remained ? the mute distance of Edgar, her uncertainty of his intentions, her suspicions of his wished secession, the severe task she thought necessary to perform of giving him his liberty, with the anguish of a total inability to judge whether such a step would recall his tenderness, or precipitate his retreat, were suggestions which quick succeeded, and, in a very short time, wholly domineered over every other.

When they arrived at the house, Edgar demanded if he might hope for the honour of being presented, as a friend of the family, to Mrs. Berlington.

Reviving, though embarrassed, she looked assent, and went forward to inquire if Mrs. Berlington were come home.

The servant answered no ; but delivered her a letter from that lady ; she took it with a look of distress whether or not to invite Edgar to enter, which she, at this period, welcome officiousness of Mrs. Mittin relieved, by saying, " Come, let us all come in, and make the parlour a little comfortable against Mrs. Berlington comes home ; for, I dare say, there's nothing as it should be. These lodging-houses always want a heap of things one never thinks of before, hand."

They

They then all three entered, and Mrs. Mitton, who saw she said, a thousand ways by which she might serve and oblige Mrs. Berlington, by various suggestions, and even directions, which she hazarded against her return, busied herself to arrange the two parlours to her satisfaction; and then, went up stairs, to settle, also, all there; making abundant apologies for leaving them, and assuring them she would be back again as soon as she possibly could get all in order.

Her departure was a moment of extreme confusion to Camilla, who considered it as an invitation to her great scheme of rejection, but who stammered something upon every other subject, to keep that off. She looked at her letter, wondered what it could contain, could not imagine why Mrs. Berlington should write when they must so soon meet; and spent in conjectures upon its contents the time which Edgar besought her to bestow upon their perusal.

Nothing gives so much strength to an adversary as the view of timidity in his opponent. Edgar grew presently composed, and felt equal to his proposed expostulation.

"You decline reading your letter till I am gone? I must therefore, hasten away. Yet, before I go, I earnestly wish once more to take upon me the office formerly allowed me, and to represent, with simple sincerity, my apprehensions upon what I have observed this morning."

The beginning of this speech had made Camilla break the seal of her letter; but its conclusion agitated her too much for reading it.

"Is this silence," said he, trying to smile, "to repress me as arrogant,—or to disregard me as impertinent?"

"Neither!" she answered, forcing herself to look towards him with cheerfulness; "it is merely—attention."

"You are very good, and I will try to be brief, that I may put your patience to no longer proof than I can avoid. You know, already, all I can urge concerning

cerning Mrs. Berlington; how little I wonder at the promptness of your admiration; yet how greatly I fear for the permanence of your esteem. In putting yourself under her immediate and sole protection, you have shewn me the complete dissonance of our judgments upon this subject; but I do not forget that, though you had the goodness to hear me, you had the right to decide for yourself. Trust, indeed, even against warning, is so far more amiable than suspicion, that it must always, even though it prove unfortunate, call for praise rather than censure."

The confusion of Camilla was now converted into self-reproach. What she thought coldness, she had resented; what appeared to her haughtiness, she had resisted; but truth in the form of gentleness, brought her instantly to reason, and reason could only resume its empire, to represent as rash and imprudent an expedition so repugnant, in its circumstances, to the wishes and opinions of the person whose approbation was most essential to her happiness. Edgar had paused, and her every impulse led to a candid recognition of what she felt to be wrong; but her precarious situation with him, the report of his intended flight by Jacob, the letters still detained of Sir Sedley Clarendel, and no explanation demanded, by which she could gather if his plighted honour were not now his only tie with her, curbed her design, depressed her courage, and, silently, she let him proceed.

"Upon this subject, therefore, I must say no more, except to hint a wish, that the apprehensions which first induced me to name it may, unbidden, occur as timely heralds to exertion, should any untoward circumstances point to danger, alarm, or impropriety."

The new, but strong friendship of Camilla was alarmed for its delicacy by these words. The diffidence she felt, from conscious error, for herself, extended not to Mrs. Berlington, whom, since she found guiltless, she believed to be blameless. She broke forth, therefore, into a warm eulogy, which her agitation rendered eloquent, while her own mind and spirits were re-

lieved and revived, by this flight from her mortified self, to the friend she thought deserving her most fervent justification.

Edgar listened attentively, and his eyes, though they expressed much of serious concern, shewed also an irrepressible admiration of an enthusiasm so ardent for a female friend of so much beauty.

"May she always merit this generous warmth!" cried he; "which must have excited my best wishes for her welfare, even if I had been insensible to her own claims upon every man of feeling. But I had meant, at this time, to confine my ungrateful annotations to another—to the person who had just quitted the room."

"You do not mean to name her with Mrs. Berlington? to imagine it possible I can have for her any similar regard? or any, indeed, at all, but such common goodwill as all sorts and classes of people are entitled to, who are well meaning?"

"Here, at least, then," said Edgar, with a sigh half suppressed. "our opinions may be consonant. No; I designed no such disgraceful parallel for your elegant favourite. My whole intention is to remonstrate—can you pardon so plain a word?—against your appearing in public with a person so ill adapted to insure you the respect that is so every way your due."

"I had not the smallest idea, believe me of appearing in public. I merely walked out to see the town, and to beguile, in a stroll, time, which in this person's society, hung heavy upon me at home, in the absence of Mrs. Berlington."

The concise simplicity of this innocent account, banished, in a moment, all severity of judgment; and Edgar, expressively thanking her, rose, and was approaching, her, though scarcely knowing with what purpose, when Mrs. Mittin burst into the room, exclaiming: "Well, my dear, you'll never guess how many things I have done since I left you. In the first place, there was never a wash-ball; in the next place, not a napkin nor a towel was in its proper place; then the tea-things were forgot; and as to spoons,

spoons, not one could I find. And now I've a mind to go myself to a shop I took good notice of, and get her a little almond powder for her nice white hands; which, I dare say, will please her. I've thought of a hundred things at least. I dare say I shall quite win her heart. And I'm sure of my money again, if I lay out never so much. And I don't know what I would not do for such a good lady."

During this harangue, Camilla, ashamed of her want of resolution, secretly vowed, that, if again left alone with him, she would not lose a moment in restoring him his liberty, that with dignity she might escape more easily, or with fortitude for ever resign it. She thought of every alternative, capable of either; but still she thought it, till, his softened look and his kind words, had nothing to offer her from the alternative.

Mrs. Mitten soon went off, and her continued and unceasing chatter made the short term of her stay appear long.

Each eager upon their own plan, both then involuntarily arose.

Camilla spoke first. "I have something," she cried, "to say," but her voice became so husky, the articulate sounds died away unheard, and blushing at so feeble an opening, she strove, under the auspices of cough, to disguise that she had spoken at all, for the purpose of beginning, in a more striking manner,

This succeeded with Edgar at this moment, for he had heard her voice, not her words: he began, therefore, himself. "This good lady," he said, "seems bit with the rage of obliging, though not, I think, so heroically, as much to injure her interest. But surely she flatters herself with somewhat too high a recompence? The heart of Mrs. Berlington is not, I fancy, framed for such a conqueror. But how, at the same time, is it possible for conversation such as this should be heard under her roof? And how can it have come to pass that such a person—"

"Talk of her," interrupted Camilla, recovering her

her breath, "some other time. Let me now inquire—have you burnt—I hope so!—those foolish letters—I put into your hands?"

The countenance of Edgar was instantly overclouded. The mention of those letters brought fresh to his heart the bitterest, the most excruciating and intolerable pang it had ever experienced; it brought Camilla to his view no longer artless, pure, and single-minded, but engaged to, or trifling with, one man, while seriously accepting another. "No, madam," he solemnly said, "I have not presumed so far. Their answers are not likely to meet with so violent a death, and it seemed to me that one part of the correspondence should be preserved for the elucidation of the other."

Camilla felt stung by this reply, and tremulously answered, "Give me them back, then, if you please, and I will take care to see them all demolished together, in the same flames. Meanwhile—"

"Are you sure," interrupted Edgar, "such a conflagration will be permitted? Does the man live who would have the philosophy—the insensibility I must rather style it—ever to resign, after once possessing, marks so distinguishing of esteem? O, Camilla! I, at least, could not be that man!"

Cut to the soul by this question, which, though softened by the last phrase, she deemed severely cruel, she hastily exclaimed: "Philosophy I have no right to speak of—but as to insensibility—who is the man that ever more can surprise me by its display? Let me take, however, this opportunity—"

A footman opening the door, said, his lady had sent to beg an answer to her letter.

Camilla, in whom anger was momentary, but the love of justice permanent, rejoiced at an interruption which prevented her from speaking, with pique and displeasure, a sentence that must lose all its purpose if not uttered with mildness. She would write, she said immediately; and, bidding the man get her pen and ink, went to the window to read her letter; with a formal bow of apology to Edgar as she passed him.

"I have

"I have made you angry?" cried he, when the man was gone; "and I hate myself to have caused you a moment's pain: But you must feel for me, Camilla, in the wound you have inflicted! you know not the disorder of mind produced by a sudden, unlooked for transition from felicity to perplexity,—from serenity to misery!"

Camilla felt touched, yet continued reading, or rather rapidly repeating to herself the words of her letter, without comprehending, or even seeking to comprehend, the meaning of one sentence.

He found himself quite unequal to enduring her discourse; his own, all his cautions, all Dr. Marchmont's advice, were forgotten; and tenderly following her, "Have I offended," he cried, "past forgiveness? Is Camilla immoveable? and is the journey from which I fondly hoped to date the renewal of every hope, the termination of every doubt, the period of all suffering and sorrow?"

He stopped abruptly, from the entrance of the servant with pen and ink, and the interruption was critical: it called him to his self-command: he murmured out that he would not impede her writing; and, though in palpable confusion, took his leave: yet, at the street-door, he gave a ticket with his name, to the servant who attended him, for Mrs. Berlington: and, with his best respects, desired she might be told he should do himself the honour to endeavour to see her in the evening.

The recollection of Edgar came too late to his aid to answer its intended purpose. The tender avowal which had elapsed him to Camilla, of the view of his journey, had first with astonishment struck her ear, and next with quick enchantment vibrated to her heart, which again it speedily taught to beat with its pristine vivacity; and joy, spirit, and confidence expelled in a breath all guests but themselves.



